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## **SPEAKING OF THE TURKS**



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**BY  
MUFTY-ZADE K. ZIA BEY**



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## CONTENTS

| CHAPTER                                   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. HOMECOMING . . . . .                   | 3    |
| II. SUMMER MONTHS . . . . .               | 16   |
| III. ERENKEUY . . . . .                   | 29   |
| IV. MODERN TURKISH WOMEN . . . . .        | 47   |
| V. LIFE ON THE BOSPHORUS . . . . .        | 67   |
| VI. STAMBOUL . . . . .                    | 87   |
| VII. BUSINESS IN CONSTANTINOPLE . . . . . | 107  |
| VIII. A STAMBOUL NIGHT . . . . .          | 127  |
| IX. A NIGHT IN PERA . . . . .             | 145  |
| X. CONSTANTINOPLE, 1922 . . . . .         | 161  |
| XI. ROBERT COLLEGE . . . . .              | 183  |
| XII. EDUCATION AND ART . . . . .          | 204  |
| XIII. A GLIMPSE OF ISLAM . . . . .        | 224  |
| XIV. A VOICE FROM ANATOLIA . . . . .      | 245  |



## **SPEAKING OF THE TURKS**





# Speaking of The Turks

## I

### HOME COMING

WE were arriving at Constantinople, my native city, from which I had been absent nearly ten years. I had been in America all this time. At first my business interests and later the general war had prevented my coming back to my own country even on a visit. I was of military age and Turkey was under blockade. When I had left Constantinople a few years after the Turkish revolution, the whole country was exhilarated, filled with joy, with ambition and with hope. Freedom and emancipation from an autocratic domination had been obtained. Nothing was to prevent the normal advance of Turkey and the Turks along the road to progress. We were at last to obtain full recognition as a civilized nation. We were at last to receive equal treatment from the other European nations.

But, alas, during the following years the gods decided otherwise. Long, interminable wars either waged or fomented by neighbouring enemies had hampered the progress of Turkey. First in

Tripolitania, then in Arabia and Albania, then again in the Balkans and finally during the general war the Turkish nation had been nearly bled to death. And now I was returning to my country, and my native city was groaning under a domination a thousand times worse even than autocracy: the domination of victorious foreign countries!

Yet I was elated; homecoming is always exciting and the entrance to Constantinople by boat is always intoxicating. Besides, I was newly married. My young bride—an American girl from New Orleans—was with me and I was anxious to show her my country so maligned by the international press.

Our boat stopped at the Point of the Seraglio and a tug brought the Inter-Allied control on board. The ship's manifesto and the passports of all passengers had to be examined by the representatives of the foreign armies of occupation. I was the only Turk on board and my wife and I travelled of course on a Turkish passport. We had been obliged to obtain a special permit from the Inter-Allied authorities before we could even start home. I took my turn with my wife, in the line of passengers. We showed our passport to the officer in charge: he glanced at it and seeing it was Turkish, asked us to wait. Our passport was in perfect order, but I believe that just for the pleasure of humiliating a Turk the officer de-

cided to examine everybody else's passport before mine, and kept me waiting till the last. An Italian friend of mine who happened to travel with us, stood near us to vouch for me in case of need. I was coming back to my own country and I might need the assistance of a foreigner! Poor Turkey, what had happened to you! Poor Turks, what had become of our illusions of ten years ago which made us believe that being at last a free and democratic country we would be recognized as a civilized nation, and would receive equal treatment from the other European nations. Our hopes were being systematically trampled under the spurred heels of foreigners, whose one desire seemed to be to eradicate for ever even our self-respect, the better to destroy our freedom, the better to hamper our march toward progress, the better to annihilate our national independence!

The Inter-Allied officer had humiliated me: he could do nothing more—my passport was in order. The boat proceeded into the harbour.

The magnificent panorama of the Bosphorus and of the Golden Horn unfolded once more before my eyes. I tried to forget the incident of the passport with all its disheartening significance. The view was too sublime, the moment too thrilling to attach too much importance to an occurrence which had already passed. I turned my attention to pointing out to my wife the resplendent charm of our surroundings. We were enter-

ing within the water gate of an Eternal City—the queen of two continents—the coveted prize of all nations—which, to make it the more desirable, God had endowed with the most gorgeous beauty.

Under our eyes Asia and Europe were uniting in a passionate embrace. Historic monuments, palaces and mosques emerged under the clear blue sky of the Orient, curving their shining domes, raising their slender minarets as if pointing to God, the Merciful. The City was shrouded in an atmosphere of peace and calm, Constantinople was reposing in her timeless dignity . . . but the harbour was filled with foreign warships in horrid contrast with the setting. Motor boats and chasers glided busily through a maze of dreadnaughts and cruisers deadly gray in a mist of colour! Battleships were lying at anchor, their decks cleared for action, their guns turned on the City! My thrill changed to a shudder, I winced.

“Never mind, Zia,” said my wife, gently placing her hand on my arm, “every one has his day. A country cannot die, a nation cannot forever be enslaved. Patience and untiring work will lead Turkey to progress. And to-morrow the Turks will have their day!”

Her understanding braced me. Progress, yes, progress! But had we progressed in the midst of ten years of fighting, could we progress during this interminable state of war which had not

ceased even since the armistice? Patience, yes, patience! But could we be patient and work untiringly under the present conditions?

\* \* \* \* \*

I took my wife to my father's residence. He lived then in Nishan Tash, in a house on a hill, surrounded by a garden, overlooking the Bosphorus. The house was large, but our family is large too, especially when it comes to living together under the same roof. My father wanted us to settle with him. Family bonds are very strong in Turkey and the Turks have retained to a large degree the old idea of clans. Large homes dating from the old days, designed to shelter all the members of one family and their children, are still in use in Constantinople. It is true that the high cost of living and the restricted housing facilities—caused by a series of fires, by the influx of war refugees and by the foreign invasion—have contributed to perpetuate to this date this system of cohabitation. It is true that even families not related to each other now live together for economy's sake. But the custom originated in the clan spirit and its continuation is principally due to the strength of the bonds attaching the members of one family to each other.

Traditions have been most carefully respected in my father's family, as in all genuine old Turkish families. We have adopted or adapted as the case may be, any and all of the western cus-

toms which are compatible with the Orient. But we still jealously preserve certain quaint customs characteristic of the old Turkish civilization. The relations between the members of our family remain as in the past: most intimate and cordial, although outwardly somewhat ceremonious. And the family has stuck together as much as the cosmopolitanism of its members and their frequent travels permitted. This blending of Eastern and Western customs, of Oriental and Occidental education and mode of living is a very natural occurrence in Turkish families such as ours. Identified with official positions which have placed them for generations in continuous touch with surrounding European countries and with the Western world, they had the duty at the same time of perpetuating Turkish traditions and the desire of assimilating any part of Western customs and education they deemed compatible with their own. Our family's governmental service dated back to the fifteenth century when it had been appointed "mufty" of Western Albania. By hereditary right it had ever since then to personify, represent and propagate Turkish customs and education in that outlying province of the Empire where it exerted a sort of political-religious governorship. But the constant relation with the Italians, Austrians, Dalmatians and Croatians of the neighbouring states gave it an opportunity to learn, appreciate and assimilate certain Western ideals. In recent years

this double influence of the East and the West became if anything more pronounced. My grandfather having died when my uncle and my father were very young, they were brought up by my grandmother, and the dear old lady succeeded so thoroughly in her task that she had the satisfaction of seeing, before she died, her two sons representing at the same time their country as Ambassador to France and Ambassador to Italy. The delicate Oriental touch imparted by this lady of another age is still to-day very much alive in members of the family. Although a man of a certain age and having filled the highest dignities in the Government, my father still to-day gets up respectfully when my uncle—his elder brother—enters the room. Although we discuss freely any subject among ourselves, without distinction of age, although the greatest cordiality and intimacy exists between all of us, none of the younger members of the family would, for instance, think of smoking before one of his seniors unless he had been especially invited to do so. Although each of us travels extensively and at times lives far away for years, the ties uniting us to each other are as strong and as “clannish” as they were generations ago.

So my father wanted us to live with him. But it happened that most of the family were then gathered in Constantinople. Besides our immediate family numbering four, my uncle, his wife,



their daughter and a cousin were in town and lived with my father. And two old servants who had been so long with us that they were now part of the family also shared the same roof. Old servants are an immovable institution in Turkey. After years of service they acquire a standing almost equal to that of a member of the family. They have their own establishment, they do not do any work except watching over the hired men, and they would feel insulted if they were paid any salary. They ask for money when they need it. They are really part of the family. One of the old servants who was then with my father had been the nurse of my mother, and had married many years ago—at which time she had been given a little house comfortably furnished. At the death of her husband she felt so lonely—they had no children—that she sold her house and came back to us. She has lived with us ever since and considers us all as her adopted children!

So while the house in Nishan Tash was quite large it was nevertheless full; and much to the regret of every one of us we decided that we would visit there only until we could find a place of our own.

This was a difficult task. All the principal houses, all the best apartments had been requisitioned by foreign officers belonging to the Inter-Allied armies of occupation, by their retinues and by their friends. We were shown many small,

dirty cubby-holes in Pera, which Greek and Armenian owners were eager to rent us at prices even higher than those prevailing in New York. In Stamboul there was no place to be had, more than two-thirds of the city having been destroyed by fire. We were just about deciding to settle in a hotel, when at last we had the good luck to fall upon a Greek couple who had suddenly decided to get a divorce. No foreign officers had yet heard of it. The house was situated in a populous Greek section but was otherwise all right and it had a bathroom which is more than can be said of the houses and apartments in Pera. The Greeks and Armenians evidently do not consider bathrooms as a necessity. In fact I believe that the bathroom in this house—although in the cellar—has greatly contributed to make of the place an American headquarters ever since we gave it up.

Anyhow we took the place and we settled in it as best we could. Of course my father, my mother and my brother became our frequent visitors. My sister came to live with us so that my wife would not be too lonely when I was out during business hours. We were in a Greek section and not one of the best. A lady alone may be quite safe in Stamboul or even in a lonely house in the suburbs. But in Pera, in the midst of the riff-raff, it is not quite safe to leave her alone even during the day. My sister is about the same

age as my wife and speaks fluently English, French, Italian, German and of course Turkish. This knowledge of foreign languages is not extraordinary in Turkey where everybody speaks at least three or four. But it made her very useful until my wife could pick up Turkish. It interested me beyond words to see how easy, after all, it is to establish good understanding between two people of a certain education, no matter how far apart their racial origins may be, no matter how little each one knows of the other's customs, breeding and upbringing. Language is enough to avoid serious misunderstanding, personal contact is enough to bridge any previous misconception. Here was my wife, born in New Orleans and bred in New York, who had never before been out of America, and my sister, born and bred in Turkey. The only apparent point in common between the two was that one had married the brother of the other. But between the two developed a friendship and devotion which can be built up only upon good understanding, irrespective of any legal bonds.

We were leading a very retired life at the time and the two girls were thrown entirely upon their own resources. The prevailing political conditions would have made it disagreeable and at times even unsafe to go out extensively. The city was full of British and French colonial troops—mostly Australians and Senegalese. While outwardly everything seemed calm and quiet, a sense of im-

pending tragedy hung in the air. Vague rumors of riots and risings, reports of atrocities committed by colonial troops were circulating from mouth to mouth. Turkish newspapers appeared every morning heavily censored: nearly one blank column out of every four. A general and indefinable uneasiness prevailed. Under the circumstances we did as other Turkish families; we led a retired life, sufficient unto ourselves, and sought our distractions in small every-day happenings.

The local colour of the street we lived in, with its vendors, its Greek children playing on the sidewalks, the nearby open-air fish market, the milk man making his morning calls at the neighbouring houses and milking his goats on their doorsteps, afforded us the greatest part of our distraction. We took advantage of this general lull of things to get our bearings and to become thoroughly acclimatized to our surroundings.

Thus we were as happy as could be under the circumstances and perfectly contented with our quarters, until the beautiful summer sun started to shine. Then the local colour became somewhat more than local: it became stagnant. The noise of the Greek children in the street began to resemble too much that of the tenement district in New York. The vendors and the milk men became commonplace. The sun became too warm for the fish market. The narrow streets surrounding our house—badly ventilated streets, without proper

drainage, like most of the streets of Pera—developed an odor which reminded my wife of the French quarters of New Orleans, increased to the *Nth.* degree! To top it all a case of bubonic plague broke out in a neighbouring house. Greek quarters, with the Armenian and Jewish quarters, are the centers of contagious diseases in Constantinople.

We had already decided that we would elect for our permanent domicile Stamboul, as far removed from the Greek, Armenian, Levantine and foreign elements as possible. Stamboul is exclusively Turkish and we preferred to live in a Turkish milieu. We had succeeded in finding a house which was to be vacated in the fall. It was right opposite the Sublime Porte, on a broad avenue, bordered with plane trees, typical of Stamboul. It was in a decent, quiet Turkish surrounding. It had large, airy rooms and a private Turkish bath, as is usual with all the old houses in Stamboul. True, it needed a few repairs, but we arranged with the landlord to have the floors recovered, to install electric light and telephone and to add a shower in the bathroom. The house would be ready for us in a few months. However, we decided that we could not pass the summer in Pera. We would go to visit my Father in Prinkipo, an island at commuting distance in the Sea of Marmora, where my family passed the summer and where many of my old friends lived. And later

we would visit my aunts, my mother's sisters, for a couple of weeks, at Erenkeuy and possibly a distant cousin of mine who lives on the Bosphorus. In this way we would make the round of the summer resorts in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. These long visits are customary in Turkey and the different members of the family expect you to make a round such as the one we considered, especially when you return after a long absence. Furthermore they were all anxious to know my wife better and we desired to tie up solidly the family bonds uniting us to our different relations before we started our new Turkish life. By this time my wife understood a little Turkish and wanted to identify herself as much as possible with her new relations.

## II

### SUMMER MONTHS

**P**RINKIPO reminds me of Bar Harbor. It is the largest of a group of four islands. It is covered with pine trees and has large and small country estates and villas scattered all over its balmy hills. It has several hotels and two beautiful clubs and many prominent Turkish families have their summer residences there. In the old days it was the Turkish resort "par excellence" as opposed to Therapia on the Bosphorus where all the embassies and foreign missions have their summer headquarters. But now the Turkish families who can still afford to live there lead a retired life, depressed as they are by the general political situation of the country and by their own much depleted finances. Therefore the Levantines, the Armenians, and especially the Greeks have invaded Prinkipo and try to crowd out the Turks from this island as they have crowded them out from Pera. They are in a better material and moral situation than the Turks for indulging in amusements. And they have made of Prinkipo—which used to be in the old days a refined and distinguished resort, like Bar Harbor—a common playground for holiday makers.

Casinos, gambling houses and even less reputable institutions have lately flourished on the balmy shores of the island. On Saturdays and Sundays a noisy crowd invades the place, while on every pay-day it becomes the picnic ground of intoxicated soldiers belonging to the international navies guarding Constantinople! The day we arrived a few intoxicated British sailors were making themselves generally conspicuous and disagreeable right on the landing pier, in front of the casinos. They rushed the Italian officer commanding the police of the island, who had tried to make them behave in a manner more in harmony with their supposed mission of maintaining order and peace in a foreign country. Finally the Italian officer had to draw his revolver and fire a shot in the air. This happened in broad daylight, in a place crowded by the mixed Levantine elements now making up the showy summer colony of Prinkipo. Composure and calm are not one of the qualities of such crowds. A panic started, the Levantines running in every direction and the general stampede was only quieted when Turkish policemen were called to the assistance of the Italian carabinieri. The Turkish police knows how to handle a Levantine crowd better than the foreign police, but now it can only interfere if it is especially asked to do so by the foreign police.

With such conditions prevailing, aggravated by their own financial difficulties, it is not surprising



that the Turkish elements have neither the heart nor the desire to assume again their position as leaders of the summer colony in Prinkipo. They prefer to keep quietly to themselves and they make it a point to avoid as much as possible any contact with foreigners or with the mixed crowd of Levantines. The beautiful Yacht Club, which was formerly an essentially Turkish institution really devoted to yachting, is now more of a gambling den than a club and only a few unprincipled Levantinized Turks still frequent it. We passed before it on our way home, and father said smilingly that it was now "taboo" for us. I can well imagine how he felt. He had been one of the founders of the club.

My father and my uncle lived together in a big white villa midway on the hill. The house had been originally built by my father as a small cottage during the first years of his marriage and when my uncle was away on one of his diplomatic missions. Then gradually as the family increased and as my uncle came back, additions had been made to the cottage. It stood now, a large twenty-five room house in the midst of pine trees, with shaded verandas running around each floor, commanding a gorgeous view over the three neighbouring islands, on the one hand, and the smiling shores of Anatolia on the other. The background to this panorama is furnished by the city of Constantinople, dimly discernable at a distance, re-

reflecting at night its millions of blinking lights in the blue waters of the Marmora. We settled into one of the wings of the house originally built for my elder brother when he married. He was now away with his family.

To celebrate our arrival my father took us at the first opportunity to the Prinkipo Club of which he was still president. This club has remained more exclusive than the Yacht Club and has therefore a larger and better Turkish attendance. It occupies the beautiful estate which was the American summer Embassy at the time of Mr. Leishman. Weekly concerts are given in its gardens every Friday night—the Turkish Sunday. My father took us to one of these concerts to make our “debut” into the Turkish society of Prinkipo. Groups of Turkish families were wandering together in the gardens or sitting at tables, enjoying the beautiful starry night and listening to the music. The ladies were attired in summer garments—beautiful Oriental capes of embroidered white silk, draping their Parisian gowns in flowing loose folds—their hair covered by a net or veil, but their faces uncovered. The men wore tuxedos or business suits and could be distinguished from the foreigners only by their red fezes, a most unbecoming and unpractical headgear which is, alas! obligatory for all Turkish men in Constantinople.

This public association of Turkish ladies and men was an innovation to me. It had gradually

come to pass during my ten years absence. Before my departure Turkish ladies could only be seen by friends of the family, and then exclusively in the strict privacy of their homes. They went out by themselves. They never mingled with men in public places. They did not even talk to them if they met casually on the streets. They would only bow slightly or make a discrete "temenah"—the graceful Turkish salutation which consists in lifting the hand towards the lips and to the forehead. Now, ten years later, Turkish men and women were talking and sitting together in public places and in clubs, freely associating with each other. This was surely a concrete sign of, at least, social progress.

I renewed many old friendships that night at the club, and my wife began there many acquaintances which developed later most cordially. My wife was surprised to meet many foreign girls who had, like herself, married Turks.

When we announced our engagement several of her friends in America had endeavoured to dissuade her from marrying a Turk. Surely a Turk could not make a good husband, East and West could never mix. And anyhow why should she be the first foreigner to marry a Turk? She had of course set aside all these arguments and had believed me when I told her that many Turks had married foreigners and lived happily ever after. I don't think, however, that she ever con-

ceived that foreign marriages had been so usual. That evening at the club and during our subsequent stay in Constantinople, she found herself in a most international *milieu*, although associating exclusively with Turkish families. She met in Prinkipo a charming Austrian girl, who had married an admiral of the Turkish navy. The mother of one of my childhood friends is a Russian lady, while the wife of another is a most attractive Bavarian girl. Many are the Turks who studied in France and married French girls. But the first prize for international marriages goes unquestionably to the family of Reshid Pasha where four out of seven members married foreign girls—Italian, English and American. So, after all, my wife found out that not only she was not the first foreign girl, but she was not even the first American girl who had married a Turk. And she hastened to write it to her friends in America and to tell them that from what she could see and by her own experience East and West could and did mix. The Moslem religion and the Turkish customs allow complete latitude as far as marrying foreign girls is concerned and leave them of course absolutely free to practise their own religion. As for the Turks making good husbands, I believe of course that this is entirely dependent on the individual and not on the race. There are good and bad husbands among the Turks, just as there are good and bad husbands among other nations.

Our stay in Prinkipo turned out to be one of the most pleasant summer vacations I ever had. I would go to town to attend business regularly, but would take long week-ends off; that is, I would do as most business men do in summer and would stay home Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. We would then go bathing in the mornings, and play tennis or go out sailing in the afternoons. The Sea of Marmora is ideal for yachting, and numerous are the sailing yachts which use Prinkipo as their port. Of course the fact that we usually used Turkish yachts would somewhat hamper our movements, as boats flying the Turkish flags were not allowed to go anywhere near the Anatolian shores, the Inter-Allied authorities enforcing at that time a strict blockade of the Nationalists.

Often there would be tea-parties or informal after-dinner gatherings in the Turkish homes. And while these were small, unpretentious affairs—the Turks cannot afford to entertain elaborately on account of their precarious means—they were a most pleasant manner of passing away the time. There was always someone interesting at these gatherings. A man or a woman of prominence who would give to us a new point of view or some insight into the general situation. Once an Egyptian princess told us of the difference in the progress accomplished by the Turks and by their cousins of Egypt in the last years. How, despite the fact that the Turks had

been hampered by political circumstances while the Egyptians had had the supposed benefit of British help, Turkish women now enjoyed a much larger political and social freedom than Egyptian women, and public education had spread more generally in Turkey than in Egypt. Another time the director of the Turkish Naval Academy in Halki told us how he had taken advantage of the temporarily complete independence of Turkey during the war to make of his school one of the most progressive and up-to-date naval academies in the world—how since the armistice he was meeting seemingly insurmountable difficulties in protecting his school from the process of disintegration systematically applied by the Allies to everything Turkish in Constantinople. Another time Zia Pasha, former Turkish Ambassador in Washington, told us how for years Sultan Abdul Hamid succeeded in keeping his Empire intact by playing the greedy ambitions of one western nation against that of the other. Once again Reshid Pasha, the Turkish diplomat who negotiated all the peace treaties made by Turkey in recent years—up to but excluding the Treaty of Sèvres—told us of his experiences at the London Peace Conference following the Balkan War. His position was most delicate as he was representing a nation which had been defeated on the battlefield and had to contend also with the inherent enmity that the ever-grasping imperialistic western powers have

always felt in regard to Turkey. His was a pitched diplomatic battle against the Greek Venizelos. Reshid Pasha was too modest to add what everybody knows: that he came out the victor, having turned the tables on Venizelos to such a degree that the Greek statesman came away from London with his reputation as a diplomat greatly imperilled.

Unfortunately, subsequent events had put back Venizelos to the fore, and after numerous shifts of policy the Greeks had succeeded before our arrival in having the great powers present to Turkey the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres. Naturally, past, present and future politics were the subject of all conversations. Feeling was running high in Turkish circles. Every one was incensed both against the Allied powers and against the Turkish Government of the moment. The Grand Vezir, or Prime Minister, was being severely criticised and accused of trampling on the dignity of the nation by accepting the Treaty of Sèvres. The Nationalist movement had already started and while the Turks remained stoically calm in Constantinople for fear of reprisals by the Inter-Allied fleets upon the innocent population of the city, the tide of despair was rising in Anatolia. The Nationalist movement was as yet not thoroughly organized. But the set purpose of preventing the application of the terms of the treaty was already noticeable in the activities of the Turkish National-

ist bands who had sworn to die rather than to lose their independence. They have, since then, stuck most efficiently to their patriotic aim.

During those critical days following the publication of the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres, and during the first weeks of the conception of the Turkish Nationalist movement, many a time have we watched from Prinkipo the smoke of firearms indicating encounters between Turkish Nationalist bands and British Colonial troops, on the hills dominating the nearby shores of Anatolia. Once we witnessed a big forest fire engineered for the purpose of destroying the hiding-places where the Nationalist volunteers would take refuge after their successful raids against the armies of occupation. These Anatolian hills lie to this day, their once smilingly green slopes bare—a silent example of the work of destruction undertaken in the name of civilization by the western powers who champion the rights of certain small nations by destroying the properties of others. These Anatolian hills are at this day, desolate and sad—but a proud monument commemorating the unsuccessful attempt of the so-called civilized governments to pass a death sentence upon a small nation whose will to live independently could not be conquered either by fire or by blood. The prologue of the greatest crime perpetrated in history since the partition of Poland was thus gradually unfolding itself almost under our very eyes, while the Turkish



circles of Prinkipo and Constantinople—prisoners in their own capital—had to watch, aloof. It was an edifying show of real Oriental restraint to see all these people stand stoically and without a murmur so that their brethren in Anatolia might have time to organize. In the face of the worst adversities and while their hearts were bleeding, they furnished to Anatolia the breathing-spell it required. To the cry of “chase the Turk out of Europe” shouted in their very face, the Turks of Constantinople were opposing a passive and dignified resistance. A friend of mine summarized one day most clearly the motive underlying their passive resistance. We were on the Prinkipo boat going to Constantinople—the boat which in the old days was full of Turkish dignitaries going to their offices. Now only a few Turkish business men were distinguishable in the crowd. A few foreign officers were lounging comfortably on benches “reserved for Inter-Allied officers”—large enough to accommodate twenty people—while crowds of men and women were standing all around for lack of place to sit. The boat was filled with noisy Levantines, Armenians and Greeks, eating dates and pistachio nuts, throwing the seeds and the shells on the deck, making of the floor a place not fit for animals, and rendering themselves generally obnoxious. My friend pointed to them and said: “These are the people who want to take Constantinople away from us in the

name of civilization! But we have to overlook their impudence, we have to close our eyes on their misbehaviour, we have to stand and bear it all. What else can we do? If we weaken and join "en masse" the Nationalists in Anatolia, we would leave in Constantinople a majority of these people and the Western Powers would take advantage of this majority to detach the city completely from the rest of Turkey. If we can't control our patience, and rise against the foreigners and the usurpers in our own city, the Western Powers will interfere and their battleships will destroy our homes. But if we stand pat and ignore them they can not do us any harm. Our duty is to preserve our city for Turkey. And we can only do it by remaining here and by opposing to those who plot against us a passive and silent resistance."

In this atmosphere of suspense the last days of our stay in Prinkipo drew near. Our house in Stamboul would be ready now in about a month. I had promised my wife to take her to Erenkeuy and to the Bosphorus. My father wanted us to discharge our obligations towards the rest of the family. And besides he was soon going back to town himself. The season of Prinkipo was at its end. Constantinople and its surrounding are at their best in the early fall, but Prinkipo gets too cold. The bathing season was finished, the yachting season was at its end. The hotels were clos-

ing. One by one the villas were shutting their hospitable doors. The summer colony was disbanding. Prinkipo was preparing for its annual winter sleep.

We packed our bags and went to visit my aunts.

### III

#### ERENKEUY

SINCE our arrival at Constantinople my wife had been complaining that I had not shown her a "harem." So she was very anxious to visit my aunts, in Erenkeuy, when I told her that it was there that she could see one, at least in the Turkish sense of the word. Harem in Turkish means nothing less, but nothing more, than the special house or the special section of a house reserved to the ladies of the family. In the old days when the ladies did not associate with men they used to live in the main house or in a part of the house, generally the best, where they had their own sitting-rooms, dining-rooms, boudoirs, etc., distinct from the sitting-room, dining-room or den of the men of the family. When I speak of "ladies" and "men" in the plural it is well to remember it was and still is the custom in Turkey for all the members of the same family to live together under the same roof. The Turkish family is a sort of a clan. So while there are always many ladies in a family, foreigners must not imagine that there are many "wives." This is a true narrative of Turkey and the Turks as they really are, so I

have to speak the truth even at the risk of shattering many legends. I am bound therefore not to fall in line with the traditions established by other writers who never fail to refer to a servant in a Turkish household as being a "slave," and to the ladies of a Turkish family as being "wives." The truth is that slavery was not generally practised in Turkey even before the Civil War in America, and the "wives" referred to by most of the foreign writers either exist only in their imagination or else are the sisters, sisters-in-law, daughters or cousins of the head of the family which foreign writers innocently or purposely represent as his wives. Of course there might be several wives in the same household—but not the wives of the same man. For instance, when we were visiting my father in Prinkipo, there were four "wives" living together: my father's, my uncle's, my cousin's and my own wife. Anyhow I warned my wife that she would see in Erenkeuy a "harem" in the Turkish sense of the word and not the kind of private cabaret which exists only in the fertile imagination of scenario writers, and in the ludicrous pages of sensational newspapers or dime novels.

Erenkeuy is a little village at about half an hour ride from Constantinople and on the Asiatic side. The shores of Anatolia are here covered with country estates uniting small villages all the way from Scutari to Maltepe—a distance of about fifteen miles. And all except Cadikeuy and Moda

are peopled with Turks. The Turks living here are mostly conservatives. They are not old fashioned and narrow but they have kept to the Turkish ways of living more accurately than the Turks living in other sections or suburbs of Constantinople. It really cannot be explained but there is here an indefinable something that makes you feel that you are in Turkey more than you do in any other suburb of Constantinople. Perhaps it is only due to the fact that you are on the hospitable soil of Anatolia.

Suburban trains running on the famous Bagdad railroad take you to Erenkeuy. I again had a jolt on these trains. In the old days the company belonged to the Germans and was run by the Germans. But it endeavoured not to arouse the susceptibility of the Turks by flaunting in their faces that it was a foreign company. All the employees on the train wore the fez, the national Turkish headgear, and the greatest majority of them were Turks. Now the Allies have replaced the Germans and have taken over the railroad as part of Germany's war indemnity towards them. The result is that their systematic campaign of humiliating the Turks has been practised even here. The new Allied administration employs mostly Greeks and Armenians—and all the employees of the company now wear caps. Really the difference between caps or fezzes is only one of form, but it has a psychological effect. For instance, even in my

case, although I dislike the fez as a most unpracticable and unbecoming headgear, and although I have worn hats the greater part of my life I could not help resenting the change: it rubbed me the wrong way. It made me most vividly feel as if we were not the masters in our own homes—at least temporarily in Constantinople and its environs.

We arrived in Erenkeuy in the afternoon on one of those beautifully clear days which make of the fall almost the most pleasant season of Constantinople. The air was mildly heated by an autumnal sun shining in a marvellously blue sky. The leaves of the plane trees surrounding the station had turned golden red and had become scarce on the branches. Even now some were volplaning to the earth on the wings of a gentle fall breeze. The square in front of the station, with its clean little shops—each a diminutive bazaar of its own—opened itself smilingly to us as we emerged from the train with our baggage. In the background we could see the little mosque where villagers were entering for their afternoon prayer.

We decided to walk to my aunt's house, which is not far from the station. Besides, it was prayer-time and we should avoid arriving while the whole household was at prayer. We heaped our luggage in a carriage—a typically Asiatic conveyance with bright coloured curtains hanging from a wooden canopy and with seats *char-à-banc* fashion. It

disappeared in a cloud of dust to the gallop of its sturdy little Anatolian horse. My wife was delighted, this was at last Turkey somewhat as she had imagined it to be. But what would happen to our bags if the coachman was not honest? Had I a receipt? Didn't the coachman give me a check? At least I had taken the number of the carriage, hadn't I? I reassured my wife: the coachman was not a Greek—he was not even a taxicab driver of one of the "civilized" western metropolises. He was a plain Turk, just an Anatolian peasant, and our luggage was as safe in his keeping as it would be in the strong box of a bank.

We leisurely followed the carriage through a little country road bordered by garden walls on both sides. High stone walls, white washed, protected the privacy of the gardens from the glances of passers-by. A big gate here, a half-opened door there would give us a glimpse of houses, small or large, surrounded with trees—elm trees, plane trees, fig trees, cedars and cypresses—whose dark branches enshrouded the houses in a mystery of falling leaves. The only house of which we could get a full view from the road was a little old house, with a slanting brick roof, an enclosed balcony hanging high in the air and supported by arched pillars, a cobbled courtyard where a few hens were picking their feed while a big brown dog, a relic of the old street dogs, was



peacefully sleeping. It was at the corner of a street, its gate wide opened, and there was only one big old tree in the garden. The others must have died of old age, and the owner must have been too poor to replace them.

The road we followed was dusty and almost deserted, with deep furrows left by chariots, carts and carriages since the beginning of time. In winter the rain and the snow turned the soft, pinkish Anatolian soil into a greasy mud. And every winter, ever since the days of the Janissaries, chariots, carts and carriages had passed on these roads, furrowing always deeper. One felt as if the clock of time had stopped here years ago. An acute sense of the living past permeated everything.

On our way my wife asked me to tell her something of my aunt's family. Our surroundings reminded me of old stories and I told her the story as told to us by my grandmother when we were tiny little boys. I used to love it as it opened before my mind vast visions of heroic ages. "Centuries ago," I told my wife, "there lived a young man, almost a boy, in the faraway mountains of Anatolia, bordering the snow-covered peaks of the Caucasus. He was tall and handsome but did not marry because he had to support his old father and mother who were so old and so poor that they could only sit on their divans all day and pray the Almighty to call them back to him so that

their boy might be left free of worries and responsibilities. But they were good parents and the boy was a good son. Therefore, the Almighty heard their prayer and freed their son of all worries, but not in the way the old people had prayed for. It so happened that the "Frank" kings of Hungary, Servia and Bulgaria declared war on our powerful Sultan and invaded his domains. To repulse the invaders our Sultan called all his brave subjects under arms. They flocked from all over to the standard of their emperor. The young boy from the Anatolian mountains near the Caucasus heard his sovereign's call and answered it immediately. But he was so far away that when he came to Adrianople, which was at that time the capital of the Sultan, he found that the armies had left many days before to meet the detested foes. He galloped post haste through the Balkans, days and nights without rest until he finally reached the plains of Kossovo. But, alas, what a sight met his gaze when he arrived there! The armies of the allied "Frank" kings had captured the standard of the Sultan, and the Turkish armies were in rout. Tooroondj—that was the name of our young hero—decided to recapture the standard of the Sultan and in the depths of the night when the "Frank" armies were asleep, he climbed the walls of their citadel, killed the sentry on watch, took the flag and returned to the Turkish camp. Next morning at dawn the Turk-

ish soldiers, awakening and seeing the standard of the Sultan waving again on the imperial tent, were filled with renewed courage. The Sultan assembled them all and before all the Turkish armies he called Tooroondj to him. He gave the imperial flag to our hero and ordered him to lead a final charge against the enemies. Tooroondj was so brave that he planted victoriously the standard of his emperor on the citadel of the enemies. Thus, first through his bravery in recovering single-handed the standard, and second through the valour he showed in leading the charge Tooroondj won for the empire the first battle of Kossovo. In recognition of his services the Sultan made him Bey of his natal province. After the war Tooroondj returned to his principality and to his old father and mother, and took to himself a wife. His descendants have ruled there until feudality became gradually extinct. Then the main branch came to Constantinople where it has ever since served the empire in all branches of the government services. Now the last descendants of the main branch are here, in Erenkeuy, and we are entering through the gate of their house."

A wrought-iron garden gate opened on a road bordered with trees. Right near the gate and on each side of the road were two little houses of seven or eight rooms each. These used to be the "Selamlik," or quarters where my uncle received his men friends in the old days, entertained them

or talked state matters with them. When business required it, or when the friends desired, they would stay a few days as his guests. The little houses were specially designed for this purpose, each of them having even its own kitchen. The service was made by a retinue of men servants alone and in the old days only men were to be seen in and around these two little houses, as around all "Selamliks." They were a sort of private club at the time that Turkish ladies were not allowed to associate with the social or business activities of their men. But now that the barriers curtailing the activities of women have been torn down the two little houses were rented to two families. Some of the tenants were sitting on the verandas and looked at us with the curiosity that all people living in a quiet country place feel towards strangers.

We followed the road winding its way through old trees and shrubs and soon reached an inner wall covered with vines, separating the gardens of the "Harem" from those of the "Selamlık." The road skirted this inner wall and took us to the back of the main house, or "harem" proper which in the old days was consecrated to the living quarters of the ladies and the private quarters of the family. It is a big building with its main entrance opening on the outer court, but with its façade turned toward the gardens of the harem, so that there is no communication with the old Selamlık other

than this entrance. The door was ajar and opened as soon as we set foot on its steps.

My aunt, with her two sisters, their children and the servants had formed a semi-circle inside the entrance hall and were awaiting us, outwardly calm but with their eyes shining with restrained excitement. Turkish etiquette requires composure no matter how excited one is. Every one has to wait his turn and we greeted each other accordingly, starting by the eldest and going down the line according to age—kissing the hands of those older than us and having our hands kissed by those younger than us. This hand-kissing is a sign of respect which remains supreme in Turkey; no matter what their respective social position, when two Turks greet each other the younger one always at least makes a motion as if to kiss the hand of his elder. It is a quaint, graceful acknowledgment of the respect and allegiance due to old age.

With all the formality attached to it the reception extended by my aunts at our arrival was vibrating with sincerity and emotion. The dear, dear ladies were patting us and embracing us, their eyes full of tears, with little sighs of delight and whispered prayers of thanksgiving to the Almighty to have thus permitted our reunion under their roof. They took us to the sitting-room where we all sat in a circle, and a general conversation, in which my wife's Turkish had to be helped by my cousin or by myself, started around. My

aunts do not speak English but this handicap of language did not prevent the establishment of ties of love and devotion between them and my wife. These bonds in fact developed in the course of time to such a degree that to-day they are as strong as the ties of blood uniting my aunts to me. They took to my wife immediately and wanted to know how she liked Constantinople. Wasn't she missing her country and her sisters? But now she had a new set of sisters and brothers. Their own children would surround her with love and try to make her feel less the absence of her sisters in America. And they themselves were my wife's aunts. She had become one with me by her marriage. And how would we enjoy staying with them in Erenkeuy? The life here was very quiet, a great change for people coming from America.

A few minutes later my uncle came to join the family circle. We all got up respectfully and stood until he sat in his favourite easy-chair. He greeted us with warm words of welcome, in his quiet, unostentatious way. Every one was conscious that the head of the family was now with us, although there was no strain whatsoever. Just a note of deference, that was all. Coffee was served. Then a maid brought us jam on a silver platter and each one took a spoonful, drinking some water immediately after. We exchanged news about the different members of the family

and about our friends, talked of the past and of our future plans. At tea time we adjourned to the dining-room and had our tea Turkish fashion: weak, with lemon and plenty of sugar. No toast is served but instead bread and that wonderful white cheese which melts in the mouth. They explained to us that during the war they drank the boiled extract of roasted oats instead of tea or coffee.

After the ice was completely broken I had to call on my uncle and my aunts to convince my wife that we were really in a "harem." I must say that they were very much amused. Of course this was a harem and no man except the members of the family had ever passed its threshold in the days gone by. But that did not mean that my uncle had ever had another wife besides my aunt. They always had lived together ever since the divorce of my second aunt, and my youngest aunt had also lived here always with her husband. They suggested showing my wife the gardens of the harem and we all wandered out together.

What a great difference ten or twelve years had made in these gardens! The last time I had seen them—before my departure for America—their alleys were carpeted with clean small pebbles, their trees were trimmed, their well-kept flower beds and orchards were a pleasure to the eyes, while the hot-house at the corner was filled with rare tropical plants and fruit-trees. The whisper of

running water flew continuously from many fountains and in a small artificial lake a miniature rowboat of polished mahogany lolled lazily in the shade of branches hanging from the shores. It was a thriving garden, speaking of ease and prosperity. But now! It looked as if it had been asleep since the last few years. Gone are the pebbles in the alleys. Broken are the window-panes of the deserted hot-house with its shelves covered with dust and its cracked vases with dried stumps which were once the trunks of tropical plants. Dead leaves rustle under your feet and hush your steps. The trees have grown in a maze of unruly branches. The rose beds of yesteryear have turned wild and now prickly bushes bearing anemic flowers stoop to the ground, fighting for supremacy in the flower garden. Shrubs of lilac, jasmine and honeysuckles—which blossom here in the early fall as well as in spring—faintly scent the air with their reminiscent perfume of past glory. The fountains are silent and the little lake is dry—while the sad nakedness of its gray cement marks the resting-place for the broken remains of what used to be the shining little mahogany rowboat. The beautiful garden is now the ghost of what it used to be. Its soul is alive—perhaps more so than before—but pensive, sad, desolate. The greedy monster of war must have reached as far as this peaceful estate in Erenkeuy, sucking its vitality in its all-devastating tentacles.



How did it ever come about? My uncle and my aunt must have had some reverses unknown to me, they would not carelessly let their property deteriorate in this way if they could have helped it. The thought worried me and I turned to my aunt for an explanation. With her diminutive slippers crushing the dead leaves covering the ground, her jet black hair covered with a delicately embroidered white veil, my aunt was slowly walking on my right through the desolate alleys. Her husband was next to her while my wife, with my cousins and my other aunts walked ahead in the distance, fading gradually in the subtle shadows of the desolate garden. My aunt explained. Her voice was subdued but she was dispassionate, firm and resigned.

"We have tried to be too careful, my son," she said, "and God has taught us a lesson. Long before the war we had deposited all our holdings with a British bank in London. We believed it would be safer there than in any other place and we lived contented on the income it brought us. It was nothing much but it represented with this place all our savings and it was enough to allow us to live happily and to take good care of our estate. The war came suddenly and our deposits in the bank were seized by England. It was fair, all the nations did the same and confiscated enemy properties within their reach. So we bowed to the inevitable and passed the long years of war

as best we could. Your uncle took sick. He is just getting over an ailment which forced him all this time to live in retirement. Nothing was coming in. The family is large, the children had to be educated. We dismissed all hired servants and sold our family jewels. At last the armistice came and we hoped to get back what was ours. But years have passed and years are passing. England has returned the properties of Armenians, Greeks and Jews who are, like ourselves, Turkish citizens, on the grounds that they were pro-Allies but she still refuses to give back the private property of the Turks. No exception is made for those who, like ourselves, were not in politics during the war and even for those who, like your uncle, tried to dissuade the Government from entering the war. Our only crime seems to be that we did not betray our country during the war, that we could not be pro-Ally after our country had entered the war! Well, what can we do? We still must be grateful to God that we have a roof over our heads. Thousands of others are much worse off. We can't take care of this property, but we have mortgaged it and we live as best we can. God has helped us in the past, God will help us in the future if we realize that no matter how careful we are we can't foresee the future, we cannot avoid the decrees of Destiny." I look in silence at my aunt, there is no bitterness in her, but her finely chiseled face is pensive. She is lost in retrospective

thoughts. She is visualizing her garden as it used to be, while her night-dark eyes glance, unseeing, over her present surroundings. She walks slowly, her slender body wrapped in the loose, flowing folds of an Arabian "Meshlah" of silk, glittering with silver threads, which she had thrown over her shoulders when she came out in the garden. She looks typically Turkish. Her slightly aquiline nose gives a refined expression to her proud, clean-cut features. She is small and thin, but her dignified carriage gives the impression of power and self-confidence.

The Pasha, walks next to her, slightly bent by his recent illness. However he is well on his way to complete recovery; his sprightly step, his rosy cheeks, his keen bright eyes denote vigor and growing strength. He caresses his small gray beard and smiles. He passes his hand in his wife's arm and cheerfully says: "Hanoum, we should not complain, we are better off now than we ever were, if our trials have made us wiser. We know better the real value of things than we did before. The Almighty has made me recover my health, we are all alive and well. I am not so old yet, I can work. I will work, and you will again help me as you did in the past. We will together rebuild our home. It is for us to deserve the help of God. We must work for His mercy."

In the silence that followed new hopes were born in me. The undaunted spirit of the Pasha faith-

fully reflects the feeling in the Turkey and the Turks of to-day. This is the spirit that has brought them through all their past trials, this is the spirit that has been taken for fatalism, but which is nothing else than an indomitable blend of resignation, confidence in one's self and confidence in the justice of God. It will save Turkey and the Turks as it has saved them in the past. They never have been despondent and they never will give up. Calmly, without any show, without any complaint they always step back into their normal lives, confident that the future will justify their immovable trust in the justice of God.

We slowly return home in the silent twilight of the evening. It is almost dinner time. The old fashioned Turkish families dine always soon after sunset, no matter the season. Here in Erenkeuy the food is supplied by a community kitchen to which most of the neighbours are subscribers. It is distributed twice a day, so the food is always freshly cooked, clean and wholesome. It is less costly and less worrisome than to keep one's own kitchen. And my surprise is great to find such an efficient modern innovation in a little village at the outskirts of Anatolia.

After dinner we sit around and talk some more. My cousin plays and sings for us some old Turkish songs. Then we all retire, for the night, the younger ones again kissing the hands of their elders. When we are alone in our room, my wife

tells me how much she has liked my aunts. It must be mutual because there is a knock on our door and my aunt enters. She comes to give my wife a pair of small diamond earrings as a token of welcome under her roof. My aunt insists on her taking them. They have no value of their own she says, but they have been in the family for a very long time—my mother wore them when she was a child.

## IV

### MODERN TURKISH WOMEN

OUR stay in Erenkeuy which had started under such pleasant auspices continued in perfect harmony and developed additional ties between my wife and her new Turkish relations. A most cordial friendship grew between her and my cousin, the daughter of my second aunt. She had been educated at the American College for Girls of Constantinople and her education was therefore a most happy blend of the Orient and the Occident. It opened an additional ground of common understanding between the two girls who became rapidly inseparable friends. The following winter when we were all in the city my cousin, my sister and my wife formed a constant trio which broke up only when my sister left Constantinople for extensive travel in Western Europe.

There was another Turkish girl in Erenkeuy who came often to call. She was a school mate of my cousin and not only spoke perfect English but wrote it perfectly too. Her ambition was to make English-speaking people familiar with Turkish literature. This Turkish girl is very active in the American colony of Constantinople.

She was then hoping to induce the American Relief Association to engage in relief work for the needy Turks also. But I am afraid that she found this task somewhat difficult. I have heard it said that while it is comparatively easy to obtain financial support for Armenians and Greeks, it is more difficult to obtain funds for the Turks. A well-managed campaign following an energetic propaganda by which Turks are represented as committing wholesale massacres and atrocities against the Christian elements in the Near East is always sure to bring substantial financial assistance for Armenians and Greeks and incidentally to secure a longer lease of life to the jobs of all those employed in Relief or Missionary work in Turkey. But how could money be raised for the Turks? To create public sympathy for them in America would necessitate the destruction of all the fables so elaborately created by years of anti-Turkish propaganda. It is easier to follow the lines of least resistance, to follow the beaten road by spreading news of massacres and atrocities whenever funds are needed. The only requirement in this case is to make a propaganda whose virulence is in direct proportion to the reluctance of the public in subscribing for new funds. Whenever the public seems to have lost interest or seems to be acquiring a more accurate knowledge of the Greeks and Armenians—whenever either of these conditions coincide with the need of more funds—a

spectacular report on new Turkish atrocities is staged and the flow of money is stimulated. The tide runs Eastward, but there it is carefully canalized into Greek and Armenian channels alone. The money has been collected for them and must be distributed exclusively to them. What difference does it make if hundreds of thousands of Turks, old men, women and children rendered homeless by the Greek invasion or by the repeated Armenian revolutions, are dying from lack of clothes, lack of shelter, lack of food. The Turks are human beings too, that is true, but they call God "Allah." And it does not sound the same!

The Turks are thrown exclusively on their own meagre resources for relieving their own refugees, for helping their needy. I must say that despite their extremely restricted means they achieve this difficult task with unexpected efficiency. The work of relief is almost exclusively in the hands of committees of Turkish women who work with untiring abnegation. The president of one of these committees, Madame Memdough Bey, a cousin of my aunts', was quite a frequent visitor at Erenkeuy and told us of how they are organized and how they work. These committees are built upon such efficient business lines that I feel I should describe them to some extent so as to give an idea of the administrative and organizing capacities of modern Turkish women. Each relief association specializes in a given activity. One



takes care of refugees, another of the needy orphans, a third one of the Red Crescent—which is the Turkish Red Cross—and so forth. Each Association is divided into Committees, every one of which is assigned to one district and is an autonomous unit with a president and also a secretary managing its executive work. These committees are divided into sub-committees: one in charge of collections, one responsible for distributions and one to organize and conduct productive work. The ladies in charge of collecting continuously canvass their districts and classify all donations—be they money or wearing apparel. They organize tag days, garden parties, concerts, etc., to secure any additional supplies and funds possible.

My wife participated in several of these tag days but on such occasions she had to don the "charshaf" so as not to be conspicuously the only foreigner among the Turkish ladies. On these days the streets of Stamboul are full of groups of Turkish ladies, young girls and children, a red ribbon pinned on their breasts with the name of the Association they are collecting for written on it, smilingly offering their tags to the public. They bother the foreigners very little and solicit charity only from the Turks. The ladies who have shouldered the responsibility of distributing the charity thus collected canvass thoroughly their respective district, to find the refugees or the needy who deserve the most urgent attention, determine system-

atically their needs and supply them with the help they require. Any funds that remain available to the Committee after such distribution are then turned over to the sub-committee in charge of organizing and conducting productive work. Here all needy women and girls who can earn their living are brought together and given work in dress-making or embroidery establishments which are under the direct management of the ladies of this sub-committee. The men are similarly given work in furniture making or carpentry establishments. Men, women and children thus employed are of course paid for their work, their products are sold and the profits realized on them are again placed at the disposal of the Committee.

Turkish ladies also run orphan asylums where little boys and little girls who have lost both father and mother in the turmoil of the different wars or in the forced evacuation of their homesteads before the Greek or Armenian irredentists, are taken care of and educated. When the little girls have reached the age of fifteen they are given into families where they work—under the continuous supervision of the Committee for orphans. The ladies of this committee keep a vigilant and motherly watch over the welfare of these girls. Once a month the girls are subjected to a medical examination to determine if their health is properly taken care of. Once a month some lady of the Committee makes an unexpected call in every house where any of

these orphan girls are working to ascertain how they are treated, what work they are doing, and if they are satisfied with their employers. She has also the privilege—which she often takes advantage of—using her savings as a dowry to start married life.

Needless to say that the ladies engaged in this relief work are all volunteers. They belong mostly to the upper classes and devote all their time and energy to the charities they have undertaken. We have seen them at work time and again and their devotion and abnegation is beyond praise. I think that the most active of these ladies—at least those who are most in the public eye because of the executive positions they hold in the Committees—are Madame Memdough Bey, Madame Ismail Djenani Bey, Madame Edhem Bey and Madame Houloussi Bey. But there are hundreds and thousands of others whose work, while not as prominent, is none the less efficient, silent little women with hearts of gold devoting their life to some work of charity and mercy.

In the shadows of the old garden at Erenkeuy, my aunts were incessantly engaged in bringing their contribution to this general work of relief. They would sit in a circle under some big trees and be busy one day sewing garments for refugees, another day packing medicines for the Red Crescent, or knitting socks, sweaters or gloves for the soldiers of the Nationalist Armies. They would

remain at work for hours at a time, day in and day out, in their quiet, unostentatious ways making a most touching picture: a group incessantly engaged in humanitarian work—the elder aunt, poised and refined, directing the work of all and participating in it with all her untiring activity—the second aunt, emaciated by years of domestic troubles caused by the kaleidoscopic political changes and wars of Turkey, but still cheerful and hopeful—the youngest aunt, as sweet as a Madonna and as resigned as one—cutting, sewing or packing with the help of their children.

I confess that I was not a little surprised by this continuous activity in which all Turkish women, without distinction of class, took a feverish part. It is true that even before I left Constantinople women were already much more emancipated than they generally were given credit for being by foreigners—it is true that I was hoping to find them at my return well on the road to full emancipation. But frankly I was not prepared for the long stride they had made during these few years. I was especially not prepared to see them so competent in public organization and so businesslike in the conduct of actual productive work. I expected to find them rather inefficient in the new fields opened to them for the first time after so many generations of seclusion.

I said this frankly to my aunt, one Friday afternoon, on the eve of our departure from Erenkeuy.

We were enjoying the ever attractive sunset from the terraces of a public garden on the shores of the Sea of Marmora. At a distance and blurred by the purple haze of the horizon, Prinkipo and the other islands were reflecting their dark green hills in the opalescent sea where glimmered the dancing lights of an orange-coloured sun. Gentle waves were breaking in cadence over the rocks at our feet. Around us other Turkish families were sitting at wooden tables in small groups. We had just finished sipping our coffees. The general relaxation preceding all oriental sunsets was gradually creeping over nature together with the lavender shadows of the coming twilight. My aunts had been working hard that day, and I told them how much I admired them and all their Turkish sisters for their indefatigable activities, for their efficiency in works they had not participated in for generations.

My aunt looked at me. Then she laughed in her musical and contagious manner: "You talk like a foreigner, my son," she said. "Whenever foreigners talk of the new emancipation of Turkish women, they express their surprise at our efficiency."

I explained to my aunt what I meant—I said: "Our women have been kept for so many generations out of all activities, their attention has been consecrated for so many centuries exclusively on their homes and families and they have so recently

acquired their freedom, that I can not help being surprised to find them turning their freedom into really productive channels and to see how capable they are in their new pursuits."

"Why should we be incapable or inefficient?" asked my aunt, "and why should the seclusion of Turkish women in past generations influence or interfere with the organizing, administrative or productive capacities of the Turkish women of this generation? After all women do not belong to a different race than men, we are the daughters of men and inherit their qualities—or their faults—their capacities or their inefficiency, just as much as their sons do. This present generation, without distinction of sex, has inherited the accumulated qualities or faults of all past generations. It is not the sex which makes or mars the individual, which makes or mars his or her talents. Individual talents, qualities or faults are of course inherited to a great degree, but they don't descend exclusively from women to women and from men to men. Furthermore they are especially enhanced by the education, upbringing and training of the individual. And I consider that the Turkish women of this generation have had individually a better opportunity than their brothers—or even than their western sisters—to prepare, educate and train themselves for the work they are now doing. The Turkish men of this generation have had to struggle for life as soon as they were out of boy-

hood and, confronted by the necessity of earning their immediate living, they did not have the opportunity of preparing themselves for the lines of activity best suited to their individual talents—or else and still worse, they have been drafted into the armies and have fought consecutively for the last fifteen years. Thousands have perished in these wars, thousands and thousands have been maimed or otherwise incapacitated for life. As for western women, those of the higher classes—therefore those who have received a better education—are caught in a whirlwind of social amusement as soon as they are little more than children and the greatest majority keep throughout their lives the earmark of the influence that society has impressed on them in their early youth. It is therefore only western women who start life with the handicap of a lesser education who, through hard work and perseverance, are generally the women who accomplish things in the Western world. This is not the case with the Turkish women of this generation. They have had an opportunity to study and prepare thoroughly until they had reached maturity. They had no social life to interfere with their studies. It is true that they did not prepare to enter personally the different fields of activity as they did not expect that their full emancipation would come so soon. But they were conscious of being the mothers of the coming gener-

ation, and to prepare their sons and daughters for their task, they equipped themselves with all the knowledge they desired to impart. And they had plenty of leisure to do this. That is why you see now so many Turkish women efficient in the activities they have deliberately shouldered."

"Tell me, my aunt, how did the participation of Turkish women in all activities of life come to pass? Was it sudden or gradual?"

"When the war came and all the men were called to the front, women unostentatiously stepped into the employments left vacant. As is generally the case in all movements of emancipation for which people are really ready the movement started in the lower classes. Pushed by necessity, some young girls dared to apply for clerical employments in shops and offices. At the time hundreds of ladies of the higher classes were engaged in helping at home the Red Crescent and other relief works. They had studied nursing. Encouraged by the fact that their less fortunate sisters had met with no opposition and were working openly in shops and offices, they in turn offered their services as nurses. Much of the field work and hospital work of the Red Crescent was confided to them to liberate men for military service. This is just what happened in other countries. But the change was greater and more permanent in Turkey. The daily contact of Turkish women with the public during the war years resulted of course



in tearing down the social walls which had so far secluded them. And once these walls were destroyed no one desired to build them up again. Turkish women had proved their administrative and organizing capacities in relief and charitable work during the war. There was no reason why they should not continue to give the country the benefit of their services even after the general war was ended. Furthermore there was still much relief and charitable work to be done and Turkey needed good administrators and organisers in many fields. So within a few years, but with gradual steps, the emancipation of Turkish women became complete, and to-day it is so thorough that any woman in Turkey can fill any responsible position as long as she has shown herself capable of it. In Anatolia, we have a woman, Halidé Hanoum, who was elected Minister of Public Education by the National Assembly."

I wanted to know how Anatolia and the rural districts had reacted to this emancipation of women.

"The peasant women were always more emancipated than the city women, my son. Our peasants have remained in a way much nearer to the original precepts of our religion and to the old traditions of the Turks than our city dwellers. We have deviated from our religion and racial traditions by the contact we were forced to enter into with the degenerate Levantine elements dwell-

ing in the cities. Muslim laws placed women on equality with men long before western laws did so, and at the time of the Prophet women were allowed more freedom than they ever had before. The Koran is full of mentions of women who were participating in public life and the only restriction placed on women in the Holy Book—a restriction which was necessary to correct the customs of the Arabs living in warm climates—is that women should not appear in public unless they were covered from the breasts down to the ankles. This is a simple rule of decency and modesty. As for the original Turkish customs they used to be so liberal that women participated in public affairs among the nomad Turkish tribes roaming on the plateau of Pamir, centuries ago. Many a Turkish woman was then the recognized chieftain of her tribe. Many a Turkish Joan of Arc has fought on the battlefields shoulder to shoulder with her warriors. It is only after the Muslims and the Turks came in contact with the decadent Byzantine Empire, it is only after the Turks conquered the dissolute colonies of old Rome and ancient Greece in Asia Minor that the Turks—especially those who settled in the cities—adopted certain customs of the conquered races. Unfortunately these customs are identified to-day, in the eyes of the foreigners, with the Turks and the Muslims as if they had originated with them. But that is not the case. While polygamy was not strictly for-

bidden so as to prevent—as was then the case in Europe—the increase of bastards and illegitimate children, Harems in the original sense of the word did not exist in Muslim or Turkish countries until they assimilated byzantine customs. The seclusion of women in separate apartments where they were condemned to lead the life of recluses pampered and spoiled solely for the pleasure of their master, can be retraced to the “Gyneceum” of Byzance. So can the custom of veiling the women when they went out, as evidenced by the pictures on old Grecian vases. The barbarous institution of Eunuchs is exclusively Byzantine. All these were certainly not originally Turkish customs and they have nearly never been practised by the peasants and country people of Turkey, except the custom which made it obligatory for women to be entirely veiled in the presence of men. Otherwise the rural population never restricted its women in any way. They always participated in the every-day life of their men. You should have been with us when I went to Eski-Shehir, in Anatolia, with your uncle during the war.” Here my aunt drew such a picture of her arrival at Eski-Shehir that I will try to give an account of it, in her own words.

“It was before your uncle was taken ill,” she said, “and he was considering starting some local industries in Anatolia. He chose Eski-Shehir on account of the railroad facilities it offers and we

went there. Only a few men who had been prevented from going to war on account of old age or infirmity were left in the country. But the people who had heard that a pasha from Constantinople was coming with his wife, sent a delegation to meet us at the station. They insisted on our being their guests and they informed us that they had especially prepared a house for us. To refuse would have hurt their feelings. They had chosen the best available house in the whole neighbourhood. It was located far in the country at an hour and a half's ride in a carriage from the station. We arrived in the evening and by the time the customary greetings had been exchanged with the delegation it was already dark. The whole delegation insisted on forming an escort of honour and accompanying us to our lodgings. We took a carriage and the ten or twelve peasants which formed the delegation got on their horses, two preceding us, the rest forming a semi-circle around our carriage. In the dark night we went through valleys and hilltops escorted by this most picturesque cavalcade; mostly old men with white beards, but sitting straight on their horses. Of the only two young men who were there, one was blind in one eye, and the other was lame. They all wore their country costumes: trousers cut as riding breeches but worn without leggings, wide belts of gay colour wrapped from hips to the middle of the breast and tight-fitting tunics

crossed by cartridge-bearing leather thongs. With their turbaned heads and their rifles swinging from their shoulders they made a martial picture in contrast with their courteous demeanour, their subdued voices and their most peaceful eyes. I must say, however, that it was a reassuring escort to have for crossing the country at night.

We arrived at the house, a darling little farmhouse of one floor in the midst of tall trees which reflected their spectral shadows in the gurgling black waters of a stream. Our escort dismounted and entered the house with us where we were received by a committee of women. They had prepared supper and had made everything ready for us. They were dressed in long, flowing robes, their heads covered with a veil and they stood respectfully with their hands folded, watching us carefully so as to anticipate our smallest wishes. Dear, pure, honest country folk of Anatolia! How much they can teach us, how much they can teach the western world of hospitality, modesty and faithfulness! The women were veiled in the presence of men, but they acted their part as hostesses while the men talked in the same room with my husband. After having settled us to their own satisfaction they departed all together, even the owners of the house insisting on leaving so that we might be more comfortable. They left us their servants to take care of us. Next day and all the days of our stay at Eski-Shehir.

groups of peasant girls would come to visit me, to enquire if I needed anything and to entertain me as best they could. They would shyly stand at the door until I forced them to come in. I had all the trouble in the world to break them of the habit of sitting on the floor out of respect to their guests, as they considered it ill-bred to sit on a level with me. They would come in the evenings, for during the day they would be busy working in their fields. Healthy and strong women they were, with red cheeks and bashful eyes. They were not the type of women living for the pleasure of their husbands, or of slaves toiling for their masters. They were wholesome women, good daughters, good wives, good mothers who had for generations been conscious of their duty to the community and accomplished it efficiently—helpmates freely helping their men, freely assisting them or willingly shouldering their husbands' responsibility in case of absence and taking care of the welfare of their families, their homes, their fields or their villages. And withal keeping their unassuming modesty intact—the modesty which is, or should be, the national characteristic of all Turkish women."

My aunt was silent for a while. Her compelling personality made us fully share her love for her Anatolian sisters. She slowly got up and gave the signal for returning home. We walked together. It was our last day in Erenkeuy

and I had not yet exhausted her views on the subject of the emancipation of Turkish women. I now asked her if she thought that its influence had been salutary upon general morality in the big cities.

"It certainly has," answered my aunt. "In the old days we did not know the friends of our husbands, brothers or sons. We were excluded from the company of men and could not therefore help our own sons in selecting their friends. Much less of course our husbands. We always feared the deteriorating influence that even one bad associate can have on a whole crowd. The Turkish proverb says that one bad apple is sufficient to rot a whole basket full of good apples. Men left to their own resources are liable to seek distraction in drinking, in cards and other unwholesome pastimes. Many a Turkish man has suffered in the past the consequences of the exclusion of women from social gatherings—just as many a western man suffers now from the consequences of leading too absorbing a club life. But now that we participate in social reunions as well as in other activities we can more fully make our influence felt among the men. Our continuous contact with their friends has rendered our husbands, brothers and sons more careful about the character of the men they associate with. Now that you are married you would not ask to your house a man about whose character you might have

some doubts. But if your wife was not with you, you might not be so strict about the manners and the behaviour of those you associate with.

Of course we Turkish women of this generation have a double duty to perform now that we have acquired our freedom. We must first see that this freedom is not turned into license as in some western countries, where young men and young girls are allowed to go out alone in couples, or—still worse—where husbands and wives cultivate different sets of friends. We must also watch very carefully over our modesty, and this is our most difficult task. Many Turkish women are taking advantage of their new freedom to trample all modesty under their feet. Alas! too many are already “over-westernized” and associate too freely with foreigners or with Levantinized Turks in the salons of Pera. Not that I object to the society of foreign men, but how are we to know the character and the antecedents of all those foreigners who are at present in Constantinople? They are mostly officers in a far-away vanquished country or civilians desirous of staking their all in get-rich-quick business ventures. How are we to know of their education, their morals and their principles? We are therefore obliged to be especially careful with foreign men. Our duty now is to raise the new generation of girls as rationally as the well-educated western girls. We want our girls to preserve their modesty, no



matter how free they are, we want them to know how to take good care of themselves, no matter whom they associate with. We don't want them to abuse their freedom. We want them to be as rational and thoughtful as my little American daughter here."

And so saying my aunt lovingly passed her arm on my wife's shoulders, in a graceful movement of all-embracing protection. They looked at each other with comprehending love. The girl of New Orleans smiled her grateful appreciation in the eyes of the woman of Turkey.

## V

### LIFE ON THE BOSPHORUS

**I**T was with real regrets that we left Erenkeuy. A visit in such a congenial atmosphere ends always too soon even if it has extended over two weeks. But I wanted my wife to know our cousins who lived on the Bosphorus, to whom we had already announced our coming, and I wanted her to come in close touch with the different aspects of home life in Turkey, to see the Turks from different angles. So we had to tear ourselves from Erenkeuy, after exchanging repeated promises of seeing each other soon and often in town, promises which—needless to say—were kept faithfully on both sides.

In the strict sense of the word our cousins are not really cousins of ours and would not even count as relations in western countries. However, as I said before, family bonds are so strong in Turkey, the clan spirit is so developed, that we call cousins even the nephews of our aunts by marriage. We consider them as such and we are brought up to feel toward them as such.

Our cousins live on the European side of the Bosphorus, at Emirghian, about half-way between the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, in one of

those old houses built right on the edge of the water. Theirs is one of the few remaining typically Turkish country houses on the Bosphorus, most of the others have either been destroyed by fire, fallen in ruins, or else been replaced by modern structures—villas, apartment houses, warehouses and depots which have, alas, contaminated with their ultra-modern and commercial appearance the otherwise smilingly passive shores of the Bosphorus. Thus this waterway, unique in the world, this natural canal between two seas, which winds its way in graceful curves between the green hills of two continents, offers now the sad spectacle of charred ruins—where a few tumbling walls blackened by fire are all that is left of the beautiful estates which adorned it but a few years ago—with here and there a few pretentious buildings whose showy architecture is a patent proof of the rapidity with which their owners have accumulated wealth during the war and post-war profiteering period. Worst of all, the lower Bosphorus is now bristling with quite a few high apartment houses peopled with chattering and noisy Levantines. Such apartment houses, with their tenants, are as out of place on the wonderful shores of this peerless waterway as the corrugated roofs and asbestos walls of the coal depots and general merchandising warehouses, hastily erected in recent years under the guidance of interested—if inartistic—foreign business men.

All the way to Emirghian I gave thanks to the Almighty for having protected at least a few imperial palaces and a few old estates which could still give an idea of what the Bosphorus looked like before the war. A few, low, rambling buildings of one or, at the most, two floors, growing lengthwise instead of upward, without a thought of economizing the land, surrounded with parks where grow old trees, are happily still left as a living proof of past splendour and good taste, and complete disregard of business advantages.

Our cousin's house is one of them, possibly a little more dilapidated, a little less comfortable than most of the other surviving buildings, as it has been for a very long time deprived of the yearly repairs that so large a house always needs. But what do we care: within the walls of its almost limitless entrance hall, on the wide steps of its gorgeously curved classical stairways, behind the latticed windows of its immense rooms, the hospitality we find is as sincere and as great as the one extended generations ago by one of the most brilliant Grand Vezirs of Turkey, who was then the head of the family, at a time when to be the Grand Vezir of Turkey really meant all the splendour that the world suggests.

Our hostess is a widow who speaks French so fluently that she would be taken for a French woman if she did not have the graceful poise and

dignity so typical of Turkish women. Her husband filled a most important position in the Imperial palace in the time of the late Sultan, and was one of the most accomplished men I have ever met anywhere. Besides being a distinguished diplomat he was an art connoisseur and had accumulated a priceless collection of antique pictures, porcelains, carpets and books. Alas, this collection was destroyed a few years ago when their town house fell the victim of one of those all-destroying fires characteristic of Constantinople. Only a few of the secondary pieces of the collection which were left in their country house on the Bosphorus can still be seen there and are an attestation of what the collection used to be. To cap it all, the collection was insured in pre-war days in Turkish pounds which at that time had a gold value, and the fire having taken place during the war, and insurance being paid after the armistice, the family could only collect Turkish paper pounds. Thus, besides the irreparable moral loss, they had to suffer a very large material loss by recovering only one seventh of the value the collection was insured originally for. This is another example among millions of the terrible losses suffered in the last years by the Turks for reasons absolutely outside their control. It is a wonder that, despite all, they keep their composure and their dignity. Calm before the most unimaginable trials, keeping a firm front through the worst calamities, never

complaining, never discouraged, never losing faith—truly the Turkish race is the most stoical of all.

Our young host, the only son of the family, is just on a leave from Germany where he went during the war to finish his studies and where he has remained since then, having obtained a leading position in one of the largest electrical engineering enterprises in Germany. His mother is justly proud of the success of her son and we frankly rejoice with her that one of us, a pure Turk in all respects, has evidently acquired such a complete technical knowledge and has shown so much capacity as to be picked out to fill a responsible position in one of the leading firms of a country known the world over for the technical ability of its electrical engineers. We ask Kemal to tell us his experiences in Germany, but he is too modest to talk of himself. He prefers to tell us how his firm is organized. He greatly admires the Germans for their efficiency but is not otherwise very keen about living with them. He finds the Germans too machine made, too materialistic to suit a Turk. His one ambition is to perfect himself in his profession and then to settle in Turkey where he will be able to give to his country the benefit of the knowledge he will have acquired. He wants to return to Germany for this purpose, but when we press him to tell us if it is for this purpose alone he admits

that he has another more personal reason: he is engaged to a young girl in Munich and at the end of his leave his mother will accompany him to Germany where he will get married. The poor boy is heart-broken that his father, Ismet Bey, did not live long enough to meet his wife. Kemal speaks English most perfectly and says that his future wife does so also. He is therefore looking forward to having her meet her new cousin, my wife.

The drawing-room in which we were was a spacious room with many doors and windows. The lattices were up and the windows opened and the breeze from the Bosphorus is so cool at this season that the great open fireplace where big logs burned was barely enough to warm the room. We sat near the windows on a wide divan which skirted about one-fourth of the walls of the room, and to keep us warmer they had placed at the corner nearest to us, a big brazero of shining copper, filled with glowing charcoal. The windows were nearly over the water, so near in fact that the rustling of the current, which is quite strong on the Bosphorus, was plainly audible. It gave the impression of being on a ship: the blue waters ran southward in an endless chain of racing wavelets and the house seemed to be floating toward the north. But opposite us the green hills of Asia, with a line of houses skirting the shores and with big Anatolian mountains tower-

ing the blue-gray horizon reminded us that our seeming flight toward the Black Sea was only an illusion caused by the incessant rush of the current. Big "mahons" or Turkish barges which have kept the graceful lines of the old caiks, passed before our eyes, gliding silently on the blue wavelets, their Oriental triangular sails swelled in the breeze. A large Italian cargo boat plowed its way toward some romantic port of the Black Sea: Costanza, where Roumanian peasant girls will purchase its cargo of vividly coloured textiles in exchange for oil, so much needed in Italy, or perhaps Batoum, where a cosmopolitan crowd of traders will give flour, sugar and other food supplies to the starving population of Caucasia against non-edible jewels, furs or platinum of limitless value. Who knows? Perhaps it goes to Odessa or Novorossisk to try bartering with Tartars and Russians, Mongols and even Chinamen who now form the motley crowd of Bolshevik Southern Russia. The Bosphorus is the gate of a whole world—a world fraught with mysterious possibilities; tempting opportunities of stupendous gains, frightful danger of very real losses, commercial and political possibilities of such magnitude that it makes you shudder to think of them. And here we are at the very gate of this world, a gate patrolled as usual by England. See that gray destroyer, slim as an arrow, speeding toward its base, the harbour of Constantinople. It flies



the British flag and is coming back from the Black Sea.

I am called back from my dreams and visions by Madame Ismet Bey who is pointing out the outstanding places of the landscape to my wife. From where we are the Bosphorus looks like a lake, the sinuous curves at the two ends making it impossible to distinguish where Europe ends and Asia begins. There, on our extreme left and near the water, is the country estate of Khedive Ismail Pasha, father of the last Khedive of Egypt who was dethroned by England during the war because of his pro-Turkish sentiments. Ismail Pasha's estate is in Europe but the hills which seem next to it are on the other side, in Asia, and the funny looking buildings on top as well as the low buildings on the shore are the depots of the Standard Oil Company. They used to belong to an uncle of Madame Ismet Bey but now they belong to the Standard Oil. No, her uncle has not sold his rights: it just happened that the Standard Oil stepped in before he had time to have them renewed. His house, or what used to be his house is the one just opposite us. He used to have the most beautiful caiks in the Bosphorus, ten or fifteen years ago, and his wife and his daughters would go every Friday to the Sweet Waters of Asia in those long, slim racing barks, with tapering ends, rowed by three or sometimes four boatmen with flowing sleeves, a beautiful em-

broidered carpet covering the stern, its corners trailing in the sea. He used to have a passion for flowers and you can see even from here the roof of the hot-house where he grew the most exotic plants he could think of: rare varieties of chrysanthemums and poppies from the Far East, tulips from Turkestan and Persia, mogra and lotus trees from India. Now he has sold his house and has barely enough to live on.

The Sweet Waters of Asia are nearby, just between the ruins of the old mediaeval castle—built by Sultan Mahomet the Conqueror before he laid siege to Byzance—and the Imperial Kiosks of Chiok Soo, a real jewel. Further to the right—that low, rambling white building is the yali of the family of Mahmoud Pasha. They entertain a great deal and have asked us to tea next Sunday. Now we pass again without realizing it to the European shores; the old castle on the hill is the Castle of Europe, the first stronghold of the Turks on this side of the Bosphorus, and the big building next to it is the famous Robert College, the American College for Boys.

The view is so gorgeous that it cannot be described. I wish I had a canvas and the technique of Courbet, the talent of Turner and the daring of Whistler to paint in all its splendour the clear sky of the Bosphorus, so clear and so blue that the eyes can almost see that it is endless—the red and gold flakes of its dark-green vegeta-

tion, so luxuriant that it speaks of centuries of loving care—the peaceful atmosphere of its old houses, so restful that you can feel that generations of thinkers and philosophers have meditated behind their walls—the harmonious outline of its hills, so smilingly round that only immemorial age can have so smoothly curved them—the mystery of its always running currents, running so continuously that they should have long ago emptied the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. I wish I was endowed with enough insight to understand the mischievous whisper of its always dancing, always running little waves. I believe they want to tell us that although the winds have pushed them south ever since time began and will continue to push them south until the end of the world, although they seem to follow the wind in an endless mad rush, they still are there. They mischievously laugh because they will always remain there, despite the wind and all its strength. I believe they want to give the Turks an object lesson as to how nothing can be swept away against its will.

Our first evening in Emirghian passed very quietly. The Turks being very reserved by nature it always takes some time before the ice is broken, even among members of the same family. We passed the time sitting around and talking, giving a chance to our hosts and to my wife to know each other.

But for every day thereafter Madame Ismet Bey and her son had arranged some special entertainment for us. Quietly, unostentatiously and with the characteristic lack of show with which well-bred Turks entertain their guests, they succeeded in giving us, without our being aware that it had all been pre-arranged, a different distraction every afternoon. Friends and neighbours would drop in for tea one evening and a little dance or a little bridge game would be organized as on the spur of the moment. Another afternoon they would take us in their rowboat for an outing on the Bosphorus and we would stop either to call on some friends or to walk around or take some refreshments in the casino of the park at Beikos, which at this season is quiet and pleasant. Once we had a small picnic at the Sweet Waters of Asia. We went in the rowboat up this little stream—a miniature Bosphorus, with old tumbled-down houses by the water, big trees leaning their branches covered with autumnal golden leaves over old walls covered with vines, here and there a ramshackle wooden bridge spanning the stream and giving it the appearance of a Turkish Venice, and then large meadows on both sides, where groups of people were, like us, taking advantage of the last few days of summery sunshine of the year. Old Turkish women in black dusters, their hair covered with a white veil arranged Sphinx fashion, were sitting cross-legged

near the water in silent and impassible contemplation, while younger women—their daughters or granddaughters—were sitting a few steps away on chairs, drinking coffee, smoking cigarettes and chattering away their time. Small boys in vividly coloured shirts, knickers hanging loose below their knees, wearing shapeless fezzes with a small blue bead—against the evil eye—would be running around and prancing with little girls clad in Kate Greenaway skirts coloured with the brightest shades of the rainbow, their loosened hair flapping over their narrow shoulders. Simple folk all, neither peasants or city folk—just the families of small village traders—the kind of people whose pictures foreign newspapermen find a malign pleasure in publishing as representative Turks. They might as well publish pictures of tenement house dwellers of New York and London as being representative Americans or Britishers. Many gypsies were there, going from group to group to tell fortunes, to sing or to dance, gypsy women of all ages and of suspicious cleanliness, who can always be detected in Constantinople by the fact that they are the only ones to wear coloured bloomers, while some old Greek and Armenian women wear black bloomers. By the way, another conception of foreigners which my wife shared but which she lost after a short stay in Constantinople was this very one of bloomers: in all our

stay in Turkey she did not see a single Turkish woman wearing them.

A little further up on the shores of the stream was a group of Kurdish porters, big, athletic fellows, watching a bout of wrestling: two of their companions stripped to the waist, their legs and feet bare, their bodies soaked in oil, engaged in a bout of cat-as-catch-can, while further up some Laze sailors of the Black Sea were dancing their slow rhythmic national dance to the sound of weird flutes and tambourines

We had to go well upstream to find a place where we could enjoy our picnic peacefully and without onlookers. But I must say that we enjoyed it thoroughly, quite as much as the spectacle we had on our way up and down the river. I could not help however realizing how much a few years had changed the general aspect of the Sweet Waters of Asia. Before my departure it used to be the smartest place to go to during the good season on Friday and Sunday afternoons. You would meet all your friends there and the place used to be congested with the most graceful "caiks" and rowboats of the Bosphorus.

On Sunday we went to tea at the house of Mahmoud Pasha. It was a big affair, almost an official reception, as are all entertainments given by the family of Mahmoud Pasha. This family is what might be called another great and old Turkish clan. At present it is probably the

most socially prominent Turkish family of Constantinople and the reason underlying its social activities is quite well known among the other Turkish families who, while possibly not entirely approving them, hold the family of Mahmoud Pasha in great respect for the utterly unselfish manner in which all its members live up to their convictions. Its social activities are looked upon as having a political reason or significance. In the first place the family was one of the first and bitterest enemies of the Committee of Union and Progress which, after engineering most marvellously the Turkish Revolution, had instituted a most objectionable sort of plural dictatorship conducted by its own members. Mahmoud Pasha's family who, like all the other old Turkish families, did not approve of this dictatorship of the few, became very active in the Liberal Party organized in opposition to the Committee. So far, so good! But with the extreme enthusiasm which is a characteristic of all the family, it carried on its war against the Committee by taking a firm and active stand against any and all of its policies. It fought the Committee on every ground, not so much because it was opposed in principle to this or that other policy but just because this or that other policy emanated from the Committee. For this purpose it joined hands with every party that was formed against the Committee. It kept up this war for years and years and one of its members—a most

brilliant specimen of young Turkish manhood—sacrificed his life on the altar of his convictions during this long-drawn feud. It was quite natural that when the Committee embraced a pro-German policy Mahmoud Pasha's family would automatically become anti-Germans. But instead of being satisfied with fighting this nefarious pro-German policy by an exclusive pro-Turkish policy—as was done by most of the other prominent Turkish families—Mahmoud Pasha's family had to go one better and ever since the armistice has actively embraced a pro-British policy. Therefore, it feels that it can perfectly well entertain and lead a social life even under the present conditions in Constantinople. The second reason which moves this family to participate so actively in the social life of Constantinople is its belief that after all social life in the Turkish capital should be led by the Turks themselves. And rather than abandon the functions of society leaders to some foreigners, or worse still to some Greeks, Armenians or Levantines, the family makes every sacrifice needed to hold and prolong its leadership. Therefore it gives large entertainments and weekly teas amounting to real functions.

The Sunday we called on them the immense rooms of their magnificent house were crowded to full capacity. Foreign officers of high rank in resplendent uniforms, members of the different high commissions and distinguished visitors of all



nations were elbowing each other and alas! also quite a few Levantine, Greek and Armenian business men whose standing in the business community had forcibly made a place for them in this cosmopolitan clique of Constantinople. Of course the crowd here was not representative of Turkish society, but rather of the cosmopolitan society that one meets in every principal center of Europe. Only a very few Turks were present, mostly old friends of the family who had come more with a desire to show their esteem and respect for the charming hostesses than mixing with the international crowd they were sure to meet there. The three daughters of the family were doing the honours with a tact and courtesy only possible in scions of old families whose breeding in etiquette has extended to so many generations that it has finally become second nature. They were assisted in their duties by two granddaughters of Mahmoud Pasha, two young Turkish *débutantes*, who were so earnestly endeavouring to overcome their natural shyness and act like their elders that their charming awkwardness was really delightful to watch. It amused my wife greatly to make a mental comparison between this refreshing shyness of the Turkish *débutantes* and the self-confidence and forwardness of their American sisters. To this day I don't know which of the two schools my wife really approved of!

Of course the brothers and husbands of our

hostesses were also there, circulating from group to group and introducing the guests to each other. And to me the most humorous note of the whole afternoon was given when the husband of one of our hostesses—a middle-aged gentleman, very serious and very widely learned—confided to me that for him entertainments and social functions of this kind were terrible bores but that he had to go through with them just to please his wife. Husbands are the same all over the world! . . . As I did not contradict him he took me in the quietest corner we could find and we had a long and interesting talk on subjects which took us far away from our surroundings.

Nevertheless I could not help but agree entirely with my wife when she told us, on our return to Emirghian, that she had found the whole thing “somewhat too stiff,” and I believe Madame Ismet Bey was also of our opinion and felt that we were sincere when we told her that we much preferred her own small at-homes and the unpretentious little parties to which she had taken us on the previous days.

I must say that we met most interesting and charming people at all these small parties. It is of course easier to get to know people when you meet them a few at a time than when you meet them in a big gathering. Madame Ismet Bey’s friends and neighbours were exceptionally interesting people. During our stay in Emir-

ghian we met for instance Ihsan Pasha, the Turkish general who, being taken prisoner by the Russians during the war, and having refused to give his word of honour that he would not attempt to escape, was exiled to the innermost part of Siberia. He told us in the most vivid manner how he ran away from his captors in the middle of a stormy night, disguised as a peasant; how, for three long months he had to walk—hunted and tracked by the Cossacks and travelling only by night—to reach the Chinese border; how he arrived, half-starved and completely exhausted in Mukden, in Mandchouria, where a community of rich Chinese Moslems gave him hospitality and, after he had recovered from his three months' walk across the steppes of Siberia, gave him money to continue his trip. He told us—but with much less detail—the difficulties he had had to elude the Allied Secret Service which were on the lookout for him when he crossed Japan and the United States, although America had not yet entered the war at that time. However, he did not tell us how he succeeded in crossing the Atlantic despite the severe surveillance of England and how he succeeded in running the Allied blockade of Turkey and popped out one day in Constantinople after every one had entirely given up hope of ever seeing him alive again. Under the most difficult and trying circumstances he had thus succeeded in getting over seemingly unsurmountable obsta-

cles and accomplishing in war time, tracked by enemies on all sides, a complete loop around the world in less than ten months. We could not help thinking how terrible those long months must have been for his wife, a charming young lady, who seemed now to have forgotten all the horror of these interminable weeks of suspense and who confided to us that she had never given up hope as she had an entire trust in the ability of her husband and an immovable faith in God. She said that she had passed most of her time in prayer.

We also met in Emirghian Captain Hassan Bey and his wife who lived with her family in a beautiful villa on the hills of Bebek, but a villa in the old style, in complete harmony with the surroundings and nestling in a park of old trees which did not, however shut out the gorgeous view of the Bosphorus. From the top of these hills the Bosphorus looks more like a chain of small lakes than like a continuous waterway, the sinuous capes of both continents cutting the view of the water in different places. It is like looking at the lakes of Switzerland from the peak of a mountain, only one is much nearer the water and the panorama has no sharp or rugged outlines but presents a continuous aspect of smoothly rounded hills, covered with forests, with mosques here and there, and with little patches of blue water. On Fridays all the ships, barges and row-

boats and all the houses owned by the Turks are adorned with Turkish flags, red with the white crescent and star, fluttering in the wind and it gives to the country a cheerful and gay aspect which reminds you at a distance of a gorgeous field of poppies.

Living with Madame Hassan Bey was her young sisters, a Turkish sub-débutante, but somewhat less shy than the granddaughters of Mahmoud Pasha, as she is a student of the American College for Girls. In the course of time it became one of our greatest pleasures to call on them at Bebek, where they give once in a while a small informal tea. They live there all the year round as it is at an easy distance from the city.

## VI

### STAMBOUL

**A**T last we settled in Stamboul. It took us a long time to arrange everything as we wanted, as it is hard to get upholsterers, carpet men and all the rest to do their work properly and rapidly here in Constantinople. Constantinople is not much different in this than any other city I know. There is possibly this difference that it is less difficult to explain what you want and how you want it to decorators who, like those in western Europe or in America, have already had experience in putting up a modern home, than to those in Constantinople who have had none or very little experience in this line. But anyhow there is always a way to get things done by working people, and the Turkish workingmen respond to good treatment in a most willing manner: they are anxious to learn and have much aptitude for learning.

As we had foreseen the hard work we had ahead of us, we took the precaution of taking possession of the house only after we had secured the servants we needed so that we might count on their help. As far as servants are concerned the Turks

have surely solved this problem by adapting to it the same kind of tradition which they maintain so jealously in their family relations. I mean to say that it is the custom for generations of servants to serve the same family of masters, so that as a rule servants and masters are so attached to each other that they never think of parting. Whenever one needs or desires a servant all one has to do is to look up some of the old servants of the family who are sure to find a son, a daughter, a niece or a cousin of theirs who is only too glad to perpetuate the traditions of his or her family by serving the family of its old masters. We, therefore, did not have any difficulty in securing ours, as we took as valet a young man who was born in my father's house where his father had been employed for over thirty years, and our cook was the daughter of my mother's nurse. She also helped the maid in keeping the house in order. In this way we could at any time leave home in peace as we were confident that our people would look after our interests, even if we were absent, possibly better than we could ourselves. And to this day we have never had any occasion for regretting the trust we placed in them. Of course for these very reasons servants in Turkey have a totally different standing from servants in any other country. They always know their place, they never dare to take liberties or to take the slightest advantage of their

special standing: it is not in their code. But they consider themselves, and are considered by their masters, almost as members of the family—second class members, if that expression could be used. Our relations with our own people were typical of these principles and in order to do full justice to them and to give an accurate idea of what I mean, I am going to confess that during a period of our last stay in Constantinople I had to consider seriously the possibility of closing our establishment and of living more cheaply in some other quarter. I therefore notified our people that they would have to look for other positions and that I could only help them until they found some place elsewhere. They received the news with an emotion which I could only hope to find in my own brothers or sisters, and left the room with tears in their eyes. Next day they asked to be heard, the three together, and they informed me that after having given due consideration to the situation they had come to the conclusion that now more than ever they had the opportunity to show their attachment and devotion to us, that now more than ever we needed them; therefore they had decided to stay with us. Do what I could I could not persuade them to leave. I found them better paying positions with some friends or relatives; they refused to go. And for three months, until I could to some extent overcome the crisis in my business, they steadily re-



fused to accept any pay on the ground that if I paid them we would have to leave the house, and if we left the house we could not find another place where we could all live together. Needless to say that such people cannot be treated as servants in the western sense of the word, and that they in turn must have no cause of complaint in regard to the treatment they receive from their masters. Of course we made good to them their sacrifices as soon as we could, and naturally they knew that we would do so, but I doubt that in any other place in the world such real devotion could be found even if those who made the sacrifice had every reason to be sure that they would eventually be adequately compensated.

Needless to say that right from the beginning the manner in which we treated our people was the friendly manner usual in Turkey. My wife adapted herself very quickly to this as she is from the South and I believe that the southern states of America are the only place where the relations between masters and servants are anything like those prevailing in Turkey. Our people of course had each his own room. The cook, who was a widow, had with her her little daughter, a child about three years old, whom we took care of almost like our adopted child. It happens frequently in Turkey that a child like this is taken with the mother into a home, the mother doing some housework and the child becoming what

is called in Turkish the "child of Heaven" of the masters of the house—that is, the masters of the house take care of the child, bringing it up and educating it just as if it were their own, but without, however, adopting it legally. In two years we hope to put our own "child of Heaven" into the English School for Girls which has the advantage of a kindergarten over the American School for Girls. Our people can go out when they want, but they never do it without asking us and they never come home a minute later than they say they will. As they are all very ambitious to learn and improve themselves we ask them into our rooms after dinner about once a week and we talk to them of the world in general and of interesting topics just as if they were friends.

They were of course of great help to us when we were settling down in our house in Stamboul. Ours was a large stone house with nine good-sized rooms, one on the ground floor and four on each other floor. It had a large brick-covered entrance hall with two separate stairways which in the old days were used, one as the Harem stairway and the other as the Selamlik stairway, but of course we modernized this by using one of them for service. The walls and ceilings had been all replastered and with the exception of the entrance hall which was painted in Turkish blue, were all calsomined in gray. Of course we had electric

light throughout and a telephone. The real innovation for Constantinople, however, was that we changed the kitchen from the basement, where it generally is located, to the first floor, near the dining-room where we had a regular American kitchenette built. Then we had a shower put in the spacious bathroom. So really the house is as comfortable as possible. As for the furniture, we had mostly some of the antique furniture collected by my father and myself in Western Europe, with here and there some Turkish embroideries, old pieces that have been in the family for many generations, and of course Turkish and Persian carpets. Despite our western furniture and some pictures we have on the walls we endeavoured to keep throughout the Oriental atmosphere of the house—not the kind of Turkish interior one sees in exhibitions, adorned with a lot of bric-a-brac and hangings, but the simple Oriental interior. This has been rather an easy task as our house is typically Turkish with large rooms of perfect proportions and big latticed windows. Therefore, by just placing a very few pieces of furniture in each room, by having straight hangings of pale Oriental colours in the windows, and by placing the few really valuable Turkish antiques in the most prominent place in each room, we have tried to keep the Turkish atmosphere which has so much charm and without which it would be sacrilegious to live in Stamboul, espe-

cially in a house like the one we have. Our friends and our guests have told us that we have succeeded in our endeavours and I believe this to be true, as an American lady with whom we have grown to be very good friends since; confided us that the first day she called on us bringing with her a letter of introduction from a mutual friend she was struck by the severe Turkish atmosphere of our house and—it being her first day in Constantinople and her imagination being full of all the horrid things she had heard about the Turks in America—she was rather nervous until she met my wife who breezed in to greet her in a perfectly American way. Needless to say that a short while after she was laughing with us at the reputation of being “terrible” which the Turks have abroad.

Certainly no one who has lived in Stamboul can even conceive where this reputation originated. Stamboul is the Turkish section of the city and is peopled exclusively by Turks. Its streets are so quiet, its crowds are so calm, that they really deserve much more the adjective of “peaceful” than that of “terrible.” Anyone who has been in Constantinople prefers Stamboul to any other section of the city with the possible exception of some parts of Nishantashe which are also exclusively inhabited by Turks and have therefore the same atmosphere of peace and quiet one finds in Stamboul.

Stamboul has the dignity of a queen. It has the same refinement, the same poise, the same nobility that a great lady always has no matter what her circumstances. Many of the houses are tumbling down. Alas! too many of the people living there are shabbily dressed—nay even some of them are now in rags. But her smallest streets, her humblest shacks have an inexpressible dignity which is at once apparent. Stamboul is a thoroughbred. Despite her misery and her intense sufferings, despite all her ruins and the poverty of her inhabitants, Stamboul is a queen. She has a soul of her own, very much alive and very compassionate—a soul which appeals to foreigners and to the Turks alike—perhaps because of the feeling of love and compassion which emanates from her and wins for her the hearts of Turks and foreigners. She loves her children: more than thirty thousand families have in the last ten years seen their houses destroyed by fire but somehow or other not one member of those thirty thousand families has remained without shelter. Stamboul has provided them with a roof and there they are, all her children, somewhat crowded it is true, but all living within her hospitable walls. She loves the foreigners and receives them with the greatest hospitality, she adopts those who can understand her and treats them even better than her own children: she has named two of her streets after Pierre Loti and Claude Farrère, her

great French friends, so that their names will remain forever alive within her walls. All who come to her fall in love with her, and my wife and myself fell immediately under her spell: she is so good, so sad, so peaceful!

Our house is on one of her principal streets, a wide avenue which leads to the Sublime Porte and then on to the Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmoud. The avenue, like most of the principal streets of Stamboul, is bordered with old plane trees where pigeons, and nightingales, have made their home. From our windows we see the court of the Sublime Porte, a big tumbled-down building where all the principal government departments are concentrated. The gates of the Sublime Porte are night and day guarded by Turkish soldiers and policemen, clean-cut young Turks, tanned from the sun and the invigorating air of their birth-place in Anatolia. Every hour of the day or of the night two of them tramp before the gate opposite our house, in rain or in sunshine, in snow or in fog. At the corner of the court there is a little mosque built especially for their use so that they can go five times a day to prayer. Five times a day the "muezzin" appears atop the slender minaret and in his soulful chant calls the soldiers and the neighbourhood to prayer. And they all pray: when the sun rises and when it goes down, in the middle of the day, in the middle of the afternoon and in the middle of

the night. Five times a day they give thanks to the Almighty, fervently confirm their faith that there is no god but God, and beg Him to assist them in following the straight path, the path to salvation. Can people of this kind be as black as they are represented abroad? Is it not monstrous to accuse them of so many dark crimes? Is it not criminal to even give credence—without investigating—to all of the deeds they are represented as doing by people who must have an ulterior motive? For my part I can't believe these people capable of even hurting a fly or of killing a wolf, unless it be in self-defense. And I can truthfully say that my belief is not based on sentimental reasons or influenced by patriotic motives. I know the people, I have watched them for days and months from our windows in Stamboul, these Turkish peasant soldiers of Anatolia; I have read in their eyes only resignation, passivity, and love. I have seen how they treat little children, how they take care of poor stray dogs. No, they cannot possibly harm anyone unless it be in self-defense.

From the upper story of our house we can see the entrance of the Bosphorus, that enchanting piece of blue water which lures all that have seen it once. We see it through the branches of trees, between the Sublime Porte and a brick building on the left, the headquarters of some newspaper. Towering above it are the houses of Galata and

Pera forming an amphitheatre much more pleasing to the eye at a distance than from nearby. We also see the dark-green trees of the park of the Old Seraglio, where a few slender towers, a few slanting gray roofs mark the position of its imperial buildings. Truly our house is situated in the heart of Stamboul, that is why we can feel it throbbing so plainly, that is why we can learn to know her so well.

The famous Santa Sophia, the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed with its six slender minarets, the Square of the Hippodrome, where the decadent emperors of Byzance held horse races nearly six centuries ago, even the famous bazaars are all within our range, almost within view of our house. And we pass our first weeks after we have settled in visiting all these places, not as tourists, but for the purpose of knowing them, of communing with them so that we will feel that we have become one with our surroundings. We go time and again to the Old Seraglio, whose nooks and corners become as familiar to us as if we had lived there, the Old Seraglio whose every building, every kiosk, every room is still alive with the history of Turkey's past grandeur, whose garden still glows with the life of all the great Sultans and of their courtiers who lived and died there. From its outer court with its long alley of tall cypresses and poplars gently swaying to the breeze as if bewailing past splendours, from its outer Council Room



where generations of grave Pashas robed in sable furs covered with silk brocades and with bejeweled turbans have discussed affairs of State and international policies while powerful Sultans were listening from behind the golden lattices of a small balcony, from the informal audience room from which a Sultan chased the Ambassador of Louis XIV, King of France, for having dared to sit in his presence, to the court where another Sultan was murdered by his Janissaries, to the Kiosk of the Lilacs to the laboratory where learned doctors prepared drugs for their august masters, to the very trunk of the old plane tree in the shade of which a resentful Sultan signed the decree condemning to death one of his generals who had failed to capture Vienna, and to the marble terrace of the Badgad kiosk where a poet Sultan improvised his immortal verses to his Sultana, the place seems to be full of living shadows and remembrances. It seems as if it were only asleep and semi-consciously waiting a signal to people again all its buildings and its gardens with Princes and soldiers continuing their interrupted earthly existence.

We go time and again to all the different mosques of the neighbourhood, places renowned the world over for their architecture and which are so impregnated by the prayers which generations of faithful believers have made within their walls five times a day for centuries and centuries, that

they vibrate with spirituality and force you to meditation—not a sad meditation with visions of everlasting fires to expiate earthly sins, but encouraging meditation which whispers into your ears that God who has created such beautiful surroundings for a city like Constantinople, God who has given the power to human beings to conceive and construct such cheerful and elevating temples of worship and prayer cannot and will not create another life where the miseries of this one are continued and multiplied eternally. A meditation which makes you realize that if winter comes, spring cannot be far behind!

Then again we go often to the Bazaars, not necessarily to hunt for antiques or to purchase things, but to get acquainted with the little old shopkeepers, the second-hand booksellers with white beards and turbans, sitting placidly in their small stores surrounded by books—hand-written books in Turkish, Arabic or Persian, illuminated with delicate multi-hued designs and covered with priceless old leather bindings; little old shopkeepers who receive you as a guest and as a friend, offer you tea and talk with you for hours on such and such a book, this or the other school of philosophy, this or the other Arabic, Persian or Turkish writer—without even thinking of selling you a book. In our visits to the Bazaars we carefully avoid the Jew, Armenian or Greek antique dealers hunting in the covered streets of the

place for foreigners and other easy prey. After a visit or two we are known even by them and we can freely wander in the streets without being molested by their employees who try to induce strangers to visit their shops. We make friends with two or three dealers in the Bedesten, the central hall of the Bazaars, a huge circular place covered with a round dome where stands are like wide shelves and where shopkeepers sit cross-legged surrounded by genuine works of art, jewels and furniture piled in a beautiful disorder one on top of the other. We make friends with a few of these vendors—old men who have kept their stands since their early youth, people who knew my father, or an uncle or a cousin of mine, who adopt us as if we were one of them. Thereafter we have no more need of worrying; if we want to purchase something we have only to tell them and they will get it for us if it exists in Stamboul, if we see something that we want in one of the antique stores and are afraid that it is not genuine or that the storekeeper will ask us a price above its real value, we just have to speak of it to one of our friends and he will expertise it for us and purchase it for us at its real value. You see we are related to the late Reshad Bey—may the Mercy of God be on his soul—and all these old merchants were friends of his, and he had through their offices and with their cooperation made the most precious collection of Turkish antiquities that

exists to this day in Constantinople. And for the peace of Reshad Bey's soul, for friendship to him, these good old people want to help us whenever they can.

Thus we have gradually entered into the inner life of Stamboul and identified ourselves with it. And we love it the more for the way it has treated us. But who would not? People in Stamboul are so different from those in Pera. Even the ordinary storekeepers, the butcher, the grocer and the candlestick maker are honest and courteous here, whereas honesty and politeness are as rare in Pera as the mythical stone of the Alchemists. The Levantines, Greeks and Armenians of Pera think they have found a speedier and better way to change everything they touch into gold, and judging by their prosperity their system may be efficient in so far as it secures gains. But the Turks in Stamboul do not worry about material gains. All they want is peace and tranquillity. And how can you secure peace with your neighbours, how can you secure the tranquillity of your own mind if you are not courteous to every one and if you are not honest?

So it is a real pleasure to go shopping in Stamboul and we absolutely avoid Pera when we want or need anything. One can find everything in Stamboul when one knows where to look for it. We have found even English and American chintz for the curtains of our bedrooms and at half the

price we would have to pay for them in Pera. The little cabinet maker around the corner has restored one of our Chippendale chairs, which was broken on its way from America, so well that the repairs cannot be detected even after a very close scrutiny. And the funny part of it is that he never had seen a Chippendale chair before in his life.

Right near our house is a shoe-store. I realized one Sunday morning that I had forgotten to cash a cheque the previous day and as the banks were closed and cheques are very little used in Turkey, my wife and I were wishing we were in America where we could have cashed one at a hotel, a club or even a store where we were known. I decided to take a chance and send our man with a cheque for ten Turkish pounds to the shoe-store to ask if they would cash it for me. A few minutes later our man came back with the cheque—and with the ten pounds, the storekeeper having absolutely refused to accept the cheque on the grounds that he had entire confidence in us, that he was sure we would pay him back next day or the day after, and that his retaining the cheque would be tantamount to mistrusting us. I could not help thinking that it takes an honest man to have confidence in the honesty of some one else. And one has all the time such proofs of honesty when one deals with the small Turkish traders. I must admit however that they have two standards of principles when it comes to naming a price for their merchandise or

for their services: the first standard which applies to their steady customers and to Turks exclusively and which is one of strict honesty satisfied with a very small margin of legitimate gain—the steady customers and the Turks know that this means one price only and do not begrudge them their small profits or try to beat them down by bargaining—the other standard is the one they apply in their dealings with foreigners or with a casual client, it consists in asking for a much larger profit, leaving enough margin to indulge in bargaining. I must also add in the defense of the small Turkish dealer that he is obliged to have recourse to this second standard especially in dealing with foreigners, purely and simply in self-defense. I have still to find a foreigner who will step into a shop in Turkey and pay without haggling over the price first asked by the merchant. This is always a source of wonderment to me as very often the foreigner who begrudges a paltry ten per cent profit to the Turkish merchant is the same one who pays without the slightest protest twenty-five or fifty per cent profit in his own town to a retailer who has had the good sense to advertise himself as having only one price for his goods.

Anyhow, in Stamboul we never have to complain of the manner in which we are treated by our suppliers, and when we deal with them we feel that we have an individuality of our own and

are not just a name or a number which has to be served. We are friends who have to be pleased. That is one of the reasons why we love Stamboul so much, and why Stamboul is loved by all who have lived there. One becomes identified with the quarter one lives in, one becomes part of it, one gets to know and to be known at least by sight by every one who lives in the same quarter: the policemen on the beat, the night watchman, the storekeepers, the neighbours—all know each other and take a personal interest in helping each other. There is a spirit of friendship, an "esprit de corps" among all members of the same community.

The community in which we live is possibly exceptional in one respect and that is that it is the center not only of Government circles, but also of publicists and doctors. Stamboul even in its living quarters is very markedly divided into sections where people of a certain trade, a certain education or of a certain walk in life live in communities distinct from each other. Ours is an intellectual community, all the big doctors, physicians and surgeons and all the writers, publicists and newspapermen live here, while the people of the Government come every day to the Sublime Porte opposite our house. The result is that after a short while we have a circle of neighbours and friends who make it a practise to drop in informally once in a while to visit with us. There are no official visitors, but friends who come in to

pass away the time in case you have nothing better to do. And the informality is such that they do not feel hurt if you cannot receive them. If by any chance you have some formal party going on, they themselves do not desire to stay. So it is perfectly charming and agreeable. So much the more since these people are all interesting people: men and women who know things and who are doing things and who shun small talk or gossip. It is a remarkable thing how little gossip there is in these cliques of Stamboul. And this is a relief and a great difference from the cliques of Pera. True, the people here are not social people in the foreign sense of the word: they are people who do things and who desire to exchange ideas, constructive and profitable ideas.

They generally come in late in the afternoon, when the Sublime Porte is closing. They have to pass before our house, and every once in a while some one of our friends stops in at tea time. After dinner we receive the visits of our immediate neighbours, doctors and publicists, if we have nothing else to do or if we do not ourselves call on some neighbours. Of course these calls are not an every-day occurrence, they happen about two or three times a week and help to pass the time in a most pleasant way, as we have on our list of steady callers people interested in different lines, philosophic and religious thoughts as well as scientific and political thoughts.



So we are now finally settled and are leading a very quiet, interesting life, right in the midst of our Stamboul, right among the Turks; not any more the Stamboul and the Turks of Pierre Loti or of Claude Farrère, but a Stamboul which has suffered and is suffering much, a Stamboul which is thinking and feeling deeply, and among Turks who are passing through a transition period of passive development—chrysalises of the Near East which may soon develop into sturdy butterflies with large wings and whose one ambition is to carry their race, their country and their associates as high as the ideals towards which their constructive imagination is now soaring.

## VII

### BUSINESS IN CONSTANTINOPLE

**N**OW that we have a house which we can call our home we are able to lead an organised life. Our daily routine varies little but it certainly is a relief to settle down and take things easily after having lived like gypsies for so many months. I go to my office every morning—everybody works or at least tries to work now in Constantinople. I had good luck in finding proper quarters for the office at a short distance from home so that it does not take more than ten minutes' walk to go to work and I can come back every day to lunch. In the mornings my wife is busy with the thousand and one duties so easily devised by any woman who takes a real interest in her home and when I come to lunch by noon everything is ready for a quiet meal "*en tête-à-tête*," followed by twenty minutes or half an hour of restful conversation. It is so nice to cut the day with a short recreation of this kind, well earned by both of us. It makes one more alive for the work of the afternoon. And for the sake of having this short recreation we very seldom ask any one to lunch. However, ours is a Turkish house and it always remains open to guests, and we are ready

to entertain any one who drops in to share our meal. This is the custom, but every one is brought up not to take undue advantage of the privilege, so friends or relations do not drop in at lunch time more often than once in a great while.

When I again leave my wife for the office in the afternoon she generally sees some friends or goes out shopping, but she is always at home when I return in the evenings at half-past five or six. We work rather late in the offices here.

Business life in Constantinople is a rather exacting thing nowadays. It is unquestionably most interesting, but there is such competition, such a scramble for work that one has to hustle to hold one's own. Unfortunately we live in a century of commercialism and trade, and no matter where one is one has to take an active part in the universal struggle for life. The unfortunates who have to earn a living are the actors in this struggle and have to devote their days, their years, their whole life to business, no matter if they are in America or in England, in Italy or in France, in Turkey or in China. In some countries many go in business for a pastime. But in others—as in Turkey—most of those who are in business have entered it only because they had to. They would much prefer, if they could afford it, to pass their time in the pursuit of some more elevating and morally profitable occupation. Dire necessity has compelled practically every one now in business in Tur-

key to take it up, men, women and children. I do not think that deep in their hearts the Turks really relish this, but they have a sort of a feeling that as long as everybody else is doing it, as long as this is a century where only material progress counts, as long as there is an urgent necessity to earn money, well they have to try to make the best of it. They have come to this conclusion only in recent years, and I believe that this is the only real good that the war has done to Turkey and the Turks. When I left Constantinople for America, ten or twelve years ago, there were very few Turks in business. Commerce, finance and industry was, and had been for centuries, the exclusive realm of the non-Turkish elements of the empire. Perhaps this explains the reason why Turkey and the Near East did not enjoy a very good business reputation in foreign countries—a handicap which it will take some time still to overcome. It will require years and years before foreign business men will realize that trustworthy and reliable people can be found in Turkey to deal with, now that the Turks are in business—just as it required years and years for the Chinamen to change the opinion of foreigners on the risks of Chinese business. Most traders who knew about the unsatisfactory results obtained in the past in Chinese trade were prejudiced against Chinese business without realizing that they had dealt through Japanese or half-bred Far Eastern firms. When

the Chinese entered personally into international business the foreigners gradually lost their prejudice but it took some time.

The fact that the Turks have not entered into business until comparatively recently is not at all due to laziness or indolence. It is rather due to two distinct causes which must be mentioned here to render full justice to the Turkish race. The first is a moral cause. The religion, the education and the Asiatic origin of the Turks have led them to look upon life more like a road that should be used to reach spiritual attainments than like an opportunity to obtain material gains. Spiritual attainments are eternal—those who accumulate them in this life continue their progress in the other with a useful capital and with assets that really count. Material gains are perishable and those who accumulate them in this life cannot take them into the other. Why should I therefore use my time and energy to accumulate things that will be useful to me only during this life which, after all, is only an infinitesimal part of my eternal existence. Accustomed to think and to reason thus the Turks have become a race indifferent to material gains and ambitious only for spiritual gains, and they have naturally enough disdained business. In fact, they have for centuries looked down upon commerce and finance and have purposely avoided competing in these activities with the less spiritual but far more

materialistic non-Turkish elements of the Near East.

The second cause is political or historical. At the time of the conquest of Constantinople nearly six centuries ago, and when for the first time Turkey acquired—to her misfortune—a large non-Turkish population, Sultan Mehemet IV. desired to give a proof of his magnanimity and, in a spirit of justice, not only recognised the entire freedom of religion of the newly subjected non-Turkish races, but even exempted them from all duties towards the state. The non-Turkish elements were only called upon to pay a yearly tribute to the Empire and outside of this were left entirely free to look after themselves. When it is realized that these religious and political privileges were graciously granted by the Turks to conquered races generations before the Spanish Inquisition—when the Christian conquerors of Spain tried to impose Christianity on the conquered Arabs and Hebrews through hair-raising tortures—and centuries before the religious wars of Europe—when Catholic and Protestant majorities tried to impose their individual dogma upon each other through massacres and torture without considering racial or even family ties—the broadmindedness and justice of the Turkish conquerors becomes apparent. Be it also said incidentally that when it is realized that these political and religious privileges granted by the Turks in 1453 have survived nearly five

long centuries, the stories of all these Christian persecutions will be somewhat discredited and will be considered at least as greatly exaggerated as the news of the death of Mark Twain.

Be that as it may, the fact is that the granting of these privileges placed on the shoulders of the Turks the heavy burden of all military and governmental duties while the non-Turkish elements went through centuries free from any obligation. Of course they were free to participate in the governmental civil service if they chose to do so, but their sense of allegiance to the country was not strong enough and their greediness was too strong to induce them to undertake duties to which they were not forced. Rather than to take care of the common wealth of the nation they preferred to take care of their own individual wealth. And as commerce, finance and industry developed through the centuries the non-Turkish elements of the country obtained a solid economic grip and used it in their endeavours to choke the Turks.

The democratic revolution of 1908 started the economic awakening of the Turks. The governmental reorganisation which took place at that time threw on their own resources many Turkish families who had until then depended for their living on salaries earned by their members as government employees. To support their family

these people had to go into business. Later the various wars of Turkey, involving losses of vast territories, necessitated further curtailment in the number of civilian and military employees of the Government. This further increased the Turkish participation in the business life of the country. Finally the general war which resulted in tremendous territorial losses for Turkey as well as in the complete emancipation of women brought about a very forceful nationalistic awakening in all forms of activity. The slogan "Turkey for the Turks" invaded general business and gave such a tremendous impetus to the Turks that it was a very great surprise to me—and a very gratifying one—to witness at my return the extent to which my people have succeeded in obtaining a foothold in the business life of the country. The great majority of the Turks are now in business, men and women. In all the shops and offices of Stamboul, in quite a few stores and offices of Pera and Galata you see Turkish girls at work behind counters or at desks, some working on big ledgers, others pounding on typewriters. All the Turkish working-girls dress very simply in demure little black frocks, their hair covered with the becoming "charshaf" with a thin veil rakishly thrown over it. It gives to their faces a soft, dark frame from under which a few mischievous blonde or black locks openly laugh at the old customs.



Of course there are many more Turkish men than women in business. Many Turkish trading firms have been formed, many Turkish factories are now operating and there are even quite a few small Turkish banks. All these firms employ Turks almost exclusively. Thus gradually the Turks are reclaiming the business of their own country from those who have had it for centuries and as the Turks are really the only stable and reliable element of the Near East they will surely obtain finally the lead in Near Eastern business matters. The process will be slow as the competition the Turks have to contend with is extremely strong and very often not fair. But their business ability should not be gauged by the time they will require to take a preponderant position in Near Eastern business. They have as rivals Jews, Armenians and Greeks who have the benefit of many centuries of experience plus old established organizations. An old saying states that it takes one Jew to fool two Christians, one Armenian to fool two Jews and one Greek to fool two Armenians. The non-Turkish conception of good business in the Orient is principally to fool those one is dealing with. And Greeks, Armenians and Jews are now more than ever trying to "deal" with the Turks!

The principal Turkish business center is, of course, in Stamboul and the location of my office gives me the double advantage of being near my

home and among my own people. My office is right at the foot of the hill of the Sublime Porte. It is near the station and almost on the water front. Big transit warehouses for merchandise to be transshipped to and from Black Sea ports are just opposite our building, but as the warehouses are low they do not impair in any way the view I have from my windows. In fact the view is so gorgeous and so little inducive to work that I have turned my desk so that I have the window and the view at my back. I believe that with such a view as the one we have in Constantinople and with the climate we enjoy, business here will never reach the intensiveness of business in London or in New York, despite the fact that geographically speaking Constantinople commands a more important economic position than any other city in the world being as it is astride two continents. While the atmosphere of New York is so full of electricity that one is forced to be on the go practically all the time, and while the fog of London makes it almost a physical pleasure to remain at work within the four walls of a cosy office, the climate of Constantinople relaxes one's nerves and its gorgeous scenery, its beautiful Oriental sky have an irresistible, softening appeal, calling to the outdoors, to repose or to contemplation, according to one's individual temperament. Although it does not make people lazy, it renders them somewhat easy-going. They do not, they can-

not struggle with as much intensiveness as in New York or in London.

From the windows of my office I can see part of the famous Galata Bridge, where more races and nationalities intermingle with each other than anywhere else in the world. I dare say that there is not a single nationality of Europe which has not at least one member cross this bridge every day. Americans, Africans and Asiatics are also represented here. Since the armistice Great Britain has added to this collection Australians and New Zealanders. Hindoos in native costumes or in British uniforms, Cossacks, Kalmuks and Tartars of the Russian steppes, Arabs with long, flowing robes rub elbows with Turco-mans, Chinamen, Japanese and Annamites, while the local crowd of Turks, Armenians, Albanians, Greeks and Slavs of different nationalities go their way in an incessant stream. Flocks of sheep and herds of cattle freshly landed from the Balkan countries pass over the bridge among electric street cars, carriages, sedan-chairs, caravans of camels and automobiles: Rolls-Royces, Fiats, Mercedes and Fords. Thickly veiled Arab women, bloomed Gypsy, Armenian and Greek women, fat Jewesses covered with gold pieces and their more modern progeny—Rebeccas with sleepy black eyes—critically view each other under the amused gaze of passing British ladies, American tourists, Russian princesses and gracefully slim Turkish ladies flaunting their emancipation to

the astonished gaze of foreigners, while Parisian cocottes and a few of their less refined local colleagues cross the bridge joy-riding in the military automobiles of their lovers who have occupied Constantinople "in the name of civilization."

This continuous movement on the bridge is only equalled by the movement in the harbour which I can also see from the windows of my office. Small steamers serving the commuters of the Bosphorus and of the Islands, large cargo boats and passenger steamers, schooners, yachts, warships and even big transatlantics seem to be moving perpetually in and out of this congested harbour bringing to it their individual load of wares, merchandise and passengers from the farthest corners of the globe. Right in front of my windows the two old continents—the cradles of the most ancient civilizations—meet and become one under the clear, peaceful blue sky of the East.

It is this very diversity of things that renders Constantinople and especially business in Constantinople so interesting and captivating that I don't know of any one who, having tasted its romance, does not feel tied and bound forever to the place. It is not only that one deals with all the nations of the world but—which is far more interesting—one is in personal and daily touch with all of them: a business day in Constantinople is really captivating and edifying. Even in such a comparatively small office as ours it offers a

degree of diversity and of unexpected happenings which is totally different from the usual routine and humdrum life of offices in other parts of the world.

From nine o'clock in the morning to the closing of business my office is the scene of an international procession and of unexpected events, some of which are comic and others tragic; but all instructive. It starts with the daily interview with our brokers, Jews, Armenians, Greeks and Turks. As merchants of all these nationalities are established in the market one is obliged to employ an international crowd of brokers. They are all, except the Turks, cut on the same pattern. Courteous and polite—but not any longer “sleek” or “unctuous” like the Oriental merchants of the old school—they want to impress you with their good-heartedness and their joviality. They want you to believe that they have no secrets from you and that their motive in working for you is solely the academic interest they take in your success. They are ready to swear that they do not want to make any profit and that they will sacrifice their commission to put a deal through for you. This display of good will and good intentions lasts generally up to the time that the deal is “almost” through; then at the psychological moment the broker makes a desperate attempt to obtain an additional commission on the grounds that he has been obliged—in your interest—to divide his regular

commission entirely among certain people whose influence alone has brought it to the point of completion. Of course all this haggling is part of the game and at times it is quite amusing to see the extent to which a man who believes himself astute can make a fool of himself. However, I must say that when one knows them well these men can be handled easily and if after a few trials they see that they cannot fool you they respect you the more for it—and try again only on very rare occasions when they think you are off your guard.

The Turkish brokers are of a totally different type. Some are well educated, refined men, former government officials who are newly in business and hope to work their way up to becoming sooner or later full-fledged merchants. They are learning the business while they give you the benefit of their often very extended connections. But they are aware of their lack of experience and expect you to coach them. Generally you have to give them accurate and detailed instructions which you can, as a rule, depend on their following conscientiously. Others are—at least in appearance—good old peasants of Anatolia, often wearing baggy trousers and turbans. They do not at first impress you as able brokers or salesmen, but try them out and see; they may know how to read only just enough to decipher laboriously the specifications of the goods they sell, they may know how to write only just

enough to sign their names, but they can and they do make mentally the most complicated calculation of discounts, percentages or commissions, they can and do book orders and clients. They are usually the most honest type of brokers in Constantinople. Many Turkish merchants also belong to this class and many of them who at first impressed me as being paupers turned out to have more money than any one else in the market. They are thrifty, active, intelligent and honest peasants.

Of course the interviews with brokers are just as much part of the office routine as answering cables and letters and going over current business. I try to dispose of all these matters in the mornings so that when I come back after lunch, rested and fresh, I can devote the greater part of my afternoon to new propositions. And this is the really interesting part of the day, as propositions of the most diversified nature abound now in Constantinople. One comes in touch with the most extraordinary, interesting and at times pathetic people with unusual business offers. Everybody has something to sell, everybody is in quest of business. Thousands and thousands of refugees of all kinds are here and all of them, as well as the usual inhabitants of Constantinople, have to earn their bread.

The most unusual propositions are generally engineered by the Russian refugees. Many of these are spendthrifts who prefer to earn their

living in an easy manner, either through gambling or through managing amusement places, restaurants, dancing clubs, theaters, etc. A group of titled Russian refugees headed by a former chamberlain of the late Tsar succeeded in starting a large establishment which provided all imaginable amusements, not barring roulette, and their enterprise was so successful that within two or three months after it started they were able to pay back with substantial profits the money they had borrowed to launch it. After this they became intoxicated with their success and considering their enterprise as a mint, proceeded to spend its nightly earnings as rapidly as they were won. They disposed of their profits at their own gambling tables, they lavishly entertained their friends and guests by consuming indiscriminately their own stocks of wines and food, and naturally within another couple of months they were obliged to close their doors. But many other amusement places flourish still in Pera under the management of Russians, who are most ingenious in this kind of enterprise. A former officer of the Russian army once came to us and asked us to finance a scheme which would have made a second Monte Carlo of Constantinople. As we did not care to enter into this kind of business we lost sight of him for quite a long period. He came back one day, however, and told us that his scheme having fallen through he and his family had been so



near starvation that they had just about decided to commit suicide collectively when it occurred to him to commercialize the hobby he had in his days of prosperity, namely, cabinet and furniture making. He had offered his services for this purpose to a new restaurant which had immediately commissioned him. His wife, a former lady in waiting of the Tzarina, had become a cook in this restaurant and their daughter, a child of about fifteen, had had the good luck to find a position as lady's maid with some well-to-do foreigners. Thus the family had been saved from starvation and the former officer is now one of the most successful furniture makers of Constantinople. He had heard that we were enlarging our offices and wanted to figure on the new furniture we needed. Needless to say that he got the order.

Some Russians have, of course, regular business propositions like the man who undertook—and succeeded—in exchanging for the account of some friends of mine, jewels, petroleum and caviar from Caucasia for American flour and condensed milk, a transaction which brought very substantial profits to himself and to my friends. Others, however, have propositions which are businesslike or practicable only to their unaccustomed eyes. Some come just with an idea and expect you to jump at it and give them a substantial participation, like an old Russian admiral who came once to us suggesting that we should purchase one of

the cargo boats of the Russian Volunteer fleet which was to be sold at auction next week for the payment of debts. He believed that by making an offer before the public auction the boat could be purchased at a bargain price. The poor old admiral was very much disappointed when it was explained to him that the creditors—British and Greek firms—were the ones who forced the sale and would be satisfied only by the highest price obtainable as their claims exceeded by far the market value of the ship. He had counted on the influence he still had with Russian circles to accomplish this transaction. He had counted on this to keep his body and soul together. His clothes were shabby and his shoes were patched.

One could not help feeling sorry for him, but the most pathetic of all are the women. One day an old Russian princess was ushered into my office. Her name was familiar to me as having been the hostess in the years gone by in her stupendous estate in Crimea of an uncle of mine on a special mission of the Sultan to the Tsar who was then summering at Yalta. My uncle had told us the lavish manner in which this princess had entertained the Turkish mission. Her residence was a palace filled with precious antique furniture and works of art. Her meals were served on solid gold plates incrustated with diamonds, rubies and other precious stones. She had thousands of peasants on her estate. Now she was coming to

ask my assistance to sell her rights to some oil fields she had in Caucasia. She was willing to sell them for a song—the rights to these oil fields whose annual income had been in the past equal to a king's ransom. I had to explain to her that as the Bolsheviks did not recognize the rights of private property, especially property belonging to the former Russian nobility, I was afraid that it would be impossible to find a buyer for her. The poor lady was disappointed, but she confided to me that she had received similar answers from other business men. She therefore wanted to make me another proposition. When she had fled from Crimea she had hidden her most precious jewels in a place where she knew the Bolsheviks would never think to search for them. She was now ready to tell exactly where these jewels were and to divide them with anyone who would recover them for her. When I told her that the insurmountable difficulties of getting her jewels out of the country while the Bolsheviks were still there made her proposition impracticable, the poor old lady, making a superhuman effort not to break down at this, possibly the hundredth, refusal of her "business" proposition, asked me if I knew any one who would care to take French lessons. Happily my wife wanted to take up French and I was able to help her.

Russians are not the only ones who scramble for business. Hundreds of transactions are pro-

posed by and handled through people of a hundred different nationalities, and the characteristics of each individual nation govern the negotiations in each transaction. With so many diversified propositions and with the different style of negotiations they each require, it really is a fortunate thing that the religions of the different races of the Near East crowd the calendar with many diversified holidays. Otherwise few business men would be able to stand the strain. As it is, the quantity of holidays which are kept by the business community of Constantinople affords a welcome relief. First of all there are the weekly Sabbaths. Turkish business houses keep their Sabbath on Fridays which is the Sunday of the Muslims. While they generally do not close altogether, business is always very slack for them on Fridays. In my office where we are all Turks and Muslims, and we are eight in all, we take our Friday turns in rotation so that on these days there are only two of us at the office. The Jews and the Christians, of course, maintain their Sabbath respectively on Saturdays and Sundays so that business is also slack on these days. Other holidays occur quite often on account of the great diversity of religions and nationalities. All these compensate for the strain of normal business days which, while not being as intensive as in some of the great western business centers is nevertheless very exhausting on account of the variety of

business treated and of the complexity of the transactions. One has to satisfy the requirements of buyers and sellers who do not speak the same business language, whose conceptions, ideas and mentality are totally different and whose methods are diametrically opposed. One has, therefore, to think and engineer all kinds of combinations to overcome all the difficulties, and I know by experience that it is not always an easy task.

At the close of the business day, when I climb the hill leading to our house, I am generally tired and mentally exhausted and the prospect of a quiet evening at home is certainly a relief.

## VIII

### A STAMBOUL NIGHT

**I** GENERALLY leave my office at about five-thirty or six o'clock. On my way home I meet the crowd going to the bridge, the commuters who have to catch their boat as well as business people and government employees who live in Nishan-Tashe or Shishli, on the other side of the Golden Horn. It is the rush hour of Constantinople. Every one is going home. The small stores on the avenue, mostly stationery stores and bookstores, are pulling down corrugated iron shutters over their doors. Every few minutes a grinding metallic noise indicates that another storekeeper is starting home. I buy my daily provision of cigarettes from the Persian tobacconist around the corner. I know he is a Persian, although he wears the Turkish fez, from his hennaed beard trimmed in a semi-circle and from the long frock coat he wears. Little Turkish newsboys shout the headings of the last sensational news in the evening papers. I always buy one and if I do not have the proper change the newsboy digs into his fez. They carry their change on their heads and the much worn squares of

paper money are the more greasy for it. I cross the street-car tracks congested with cars wherein human cattle is packed as tightly as in a New York subway. People are streaming down the hill in groups of three or four, clerks from the Sublime Porte looking prosperous and smart despite the fact that their salary which is anyhow barely enough to support them, is paid to them every two or three months. They go hungry and live in the cheapest possible quarters but try to look well, these poor Turkish Government employees, in an endeavour to save appearances and to keep up their dignity in the eyes of the foreigners. They walk leisurely and stop to greet each other. They talk politics. I know quite a few of them and every once in a while we exchange "temenahs," the graceful Turkish salutation. Quite a few go up the hill; Turkish business men and working girls living in Stamboul like myself.

It is twilight. Overhead little puffs of pink cloud reflect the last rays of the setting sun, while one by one lights are turned on in the windows of surrounding buildings, indicating the homecoming of some toiler. The crowd in the street is thinning. I reach our house as the automobiles of the Ministers, who now meet in daily council at the Sublime Porte, pass through the gates of the Government Palace. They work late, they are the last ones to leave.

My wife is waiting for me. Unless we have

previously arranged to meet somewhere else, she is always at home to greet me at my return. It is not proper for ladies to be alone in the streets of Constantinople after sunset, and we both like to start the evening together. We tell each other what we have done in the afternoon, we read the evening papers and then we sit down to dinner. We have our evening meal early: everybody dines early in Stamboul. When we are alone we have dinner served in the drawing-room, on an old Italian carved wood table. It is less formal and cosier. When dinner is finished the servants clear the table. My wife sits on the couch with her sewing, I sit next to her in an easy chair. We talk. It is peaceful and quiet. We feel our nerves gradually relaxing from the strain of the day.

It is now evening. The dusk has fallen over Stamboul. Above, the purple sky is getting darker and one by one the stars are lighting in the firmament. Only one of our big windows is opened as it is quite cool outside. From behind the lattices we see the breeze gently swaying the branches of the plane trees bordering our street. Through the cleft of a dark, narrow street which winds its way to the nearby sea we can see the lights of some ships lying in the harbour. Just opposite us the rambling building of the Sublime Porte is silent and dark, the Government Departments are all closed. In the street below only a few belated



passers-by are hurrying home. At a distance the Mosque of Santa Sophia raises its minarets high against the starlit vault of Heaven, as in prayer, and the park of the Old Seraglio projects the black silhouettes of its trees: oaks and cypresses which have witnessed the splendours of the reign of Soliman the Magnificent. In the branches of a nearby plane tree a flock of doves flutter and settle for the coming night.

A calm oriental night is falling over the city. The darkness deepens and the quiet increases. I look out from the window. In the streets, a water seller is walking slowly, I can see dimly a graceful brass vessel swinging from his shoulders. He stops before the house, and in a plaintive velvety voice chants the merits of his cool water "as sweet as frozen sherbet"—then goes on his way and disappears in the blue night. At a distance we hear the watchman coming, knocking his club on the pavement to mark the hour "toc—toc—toc—toc . . ." He is coming nearer, his beat takes him through our street. Now he stops: the street is so quiet that we can hear him greeting someone: "Selam' u aleykum—peace be with you . . ." The newcomer tells him something. Then, in the silence, the man who watches after night over the safety of all raises his voice in a long-drawn note of warning: "Y'a'a'an gun vaaar!" He has been notified that there is a fire and he notifies all of the danger. Most of us live

in frame houses here in Stamboul and a fire is dangerous. Time and again thousands of houses have disappeared in a single night, thousands of people have remained homeless. If the fire is near we must all gather our belongings. My wife is anxious. She comes to the window: let us find out where the fire is, the watchman will tell us. He is now quite near, he beats his club almost on our doorstep. "Y'a'a'an gun Vaaar—Mahmoud Pashada." It is not so bad, Mahmoud Pasha is the name of a quarter, a wholesale business district where no one lives—so the losers will be the insurance companies who charge such high premiums that they can afford to lose. It is quite far from us although from the windows at the back of our house we can see a red glow behind the mosque of Yeni Djami: it makes its cupola shine and its minarets throw fantastic shadows over the neighbouring buildings. But the conflagration is small and the wind is not strong to-night, so it will be soon under control. Let us return to the sitting-room.

The watchman continues his round. His voice is now dying out in the distance. Everything is quiet again. The night has fallen. It is the hour of relaxation. We might receive the visit of some friends. One can better exchange ideas in the calm of the night, and people in Stamboul are now too poor to indulge in regular social life but they love to call on each other in after-dinner impromptu

visits. They leave the more elaborate kind of entertainments to their more wealthy cousins living on the slopes of the hills above Pera, in Shishli or Nishantashe. Here we are satisfied with simple, unpretentious visits; they help pass away the time in a far more interesting and morally productive manner than the dancing and exchange of platitudes usual in large social gatherings.

Let us light the candles and turn out the electric light. The soft, golden glow of candles is more restful, and conducive to deeper thought. It is in harmony with the darkness outside and will attune us to the relaxation of nature at night. I love semi-darkness. I will only light the silver candelabra on the table and this funny old lantern hanging here at the corner. Its silent shadow will talk to us of the past, when its pale light was used to illumine the steps of those who ventured in the streets after sunset. Even I can remember the time when the streets of Stamboul were not lighted. Electricity is a very recent innovation and in my childhood there were so few and such feeble oil lamps in the streets that every one who went out at night was accompanied by a servant who carried a lantern like this, a folding lantern with a round chiselled silver bottom and a round chiselled silver top, its sides made of oiled parchment or goatskin pleated horizontally so that it could fold when not in use. The servant would walk just a few steps before you, holding the lan-

tern low on the ground so that its dim light would illumine your steps. It was an event for me to go out after sunset and the few occasions when I did have remained engraved in my memory as great adventures, somewhat terrifying and most exciting. I remember how I used to hang on to the hand of my mother. I was abashed by the darkness surrounding us, by the mystery of the night and its solitude. I remember how I would strain my ears to hear the familiar rustle of my mother's wide silk skirt, how I would ask her any question that came into my mind just for the sake of hearing her musical soft voice coming from the darkness above, in modulated tones, I remember how fascinated I would be by the yellowish dancing light of the swinging lantern, which would project big shadows all around us. And when one of the street dogs, so common at that time, would wake up and run away from our path, I would squeeze my mother's hand and nestle nearer to her so that I could feel her silk dress against my cheek.

And now this lantern hangs in our drawing-room, not any more for a useful purpose in this age of electricity, but as an artistic ornament, a symbol of the past, a symbol of the darkness of bygone years. Its yellowish glow illumines the head of my wife who sits right under it. It surrounds her hair with a halo of ancient light. The cycle of thoughts continues, running after the

cycle of time in a sequence of flashes followed by long periods of darkness!

We are silent. The street outside must be almost deserted, I can only hear occasional steps every once in a while. But something now stirs at our front door. Someone knocks. It might be some friends, it might be a poor man, a widow or an orphan who comes to ask for some help or for something to eat. Ours is a Turkish home and no matter who comes the Turks welcome an opportunity to be hospitable or charitable. No matter how hard the times, there is always something for the guests.

It must be guests as they are coming up the stairs. The voices stop at our door. The servant announces our neighbours, Dr. Assim Pasha and his wife with our mutual friend, Djevad Bey. They are welcome, the night is still very young and they are all very interesting people. Djevad is a newspaper man, he might have some interesting news to impart. The doctor is one of the leading surgeons of the age known not only here but even in France and Germany where he completed his studies. He is a scientist and more: he is a thinker, a philosopher, a man who knows human beings and humanity intimately. His wife is one of the modern Turkish women who do real things. She speaks English fluently so she has grown to be a very good friend of my wife despite the difference in their age. She has a daughter who is

now studying surgery in Germany. They are all quiet, nice people, they exactly fit our mood tonight, they materialize the deep, calm atmosphere of a Stamboul night. We need not turn on the lights.

We sit around, sip our coffee and smoke. Madame Assim Pasha is on the sofa next to my wife. She tells her of her day. She is always engaged on some errand of mercy, helping the Turkish refugees. Thousands and thousands of them, escaped from the horrors of the Greek invasion of Western Anatolia, are now in Constantinople, homeless, without clothes and in want. All the foreigners in Constantinople, all the foreign papers abroad think, talk and assist only Russian, Greeks, Armenians and others who are now crowding this poor city of Constantinople which the armistice and the unnatural Treaty of Sèvres have made the dumping-ground of all those in need, but no one gives a thought to the Turkish refugees except the Turks. They are horded in Mosques and in public buildings and great misery prevails among them. They depend entirely upon the mercy of the Turks of Constantinople who are themselves too poor to give sufficient help. But we have to do what we can, we have to share our all with our hungry brothers and sisters of Western Anatolia who have come to our city after the Greeks, mandatories of "civilized" Europe, had burned their villages, ransacked their farms and killed their

cattle. The Turks are too proud to beg for the assistance of foreigners, and we are all Turks. So we must multiply our efforts, we must do the impossible to feed and clothe our refugees, to take care of their health and to send their children to school even if we can count only on our own resources. Let the Russians, the Armenians and the Greeks cry and wail on the sympathetic shoulders of the foreigners. We will keep our courage up, and with the help of God we will see our needy ones through, we will overcome our present troubles as we have overcome all our past troubles! We do not ask help from any one, we only ask to be left alone. Why do not the foreigners take in their own homes their pet children, their cry-babies, and leave us alone to heal our wounds? Are they afraid that the public opinion in their countries will—through direct contact—realize too soon the hypocrisy of their pets? Are they afraid that their own people might be contaminated with the political and moral ailments of these foreign refugees? And if so why should they let Constantinople and its people be contaminated by anarchical ideals and immoral principles? Have they not occupied Constantinople for the purpose of maintaining law and order? Is Constantinople now more lawful than before? Are not the foreign refugees responsible for the spread of immorality in Constantinople? And what will happen to Constantinople if all these foreigners, imported

against their will, remain here and spread their propaganda of discontent, restlessness and lawlessness? Madame Assim Pasha talks calmly and in a subdued tone. She does not argue, she just states facts. Slowly and masterfully she depicts the gloomy consequences that the thoughtlessness of the Western Powers might bring to this city of misery. The present is dark enough but the future will be darker unless the Western Powers find a remedy to it. The shadows in our room seem to have darkened, we are silent for a few minutes, then Djevad Bey speaks.

He has been recently to Anatolia and tells us that the situation in the regions occupied by the foreigners is much worse there than here. Standing at his full height, his slim athletic figure dimly discernible in the darkness of the room, he quivers with restrained emotion and tells us of the sufferings he has seen there. He launches a diatribe against the foreign press which will never tell of the miseries and injustice suffered by the Turks, while it will always exaggerate the miseries and sufferings of all other nations—the foreign press which will never tell of the qualities and accomplishments of the Turks while it will show through a magnifying glass the accomplishments of other nations. Will this double standard ever be changed? Can the truth be forever distorted? Why this prejudice against the Turks? Will the Western world ever outgrow it and discard it? Will the World



ever replace its preconceived hatred for some and friendship for others by a single feeling of compassion for all who suffer, no matter who they may be, no matter what their race, and by one all-embracing feeling of love for all—will it ever adopt one single standard of justice for all?

Djevad has once more voiced the inherent complaint of all the Turks who resent the malign treatment they are subjected to, the campaign of defamation which they have had to put up with since the last generation. Under their stoic calmness these questions loom large in the inner-consciousness of all the Turks and cast a deep shadow of doubt over their faith. In the peace and quiet of our room we feel that his questions, if unanswered, will shatter our confidence in the future, we feel that the world might yet be plunged in a terror still worse than that of the years of the great war if it destroys the faith of the Turks and throws them in despair into the arms of their Nihilist neighbours of the North, at the head of millions of Central Asiatic tribes, at the head of millions of Muslims now groaning under the heels of their conquerors: a terror which might be darker than the blackest periods of the Darkest Ages.

Instinctively we turn for an answer to the Doctor. He has been silent until now. He sits in a high-backed chair like a throne. The candelabra on the table illumines his expressive face and

throws the outline of his powerful profile in an enormous shadow on the gray wall. It almost reaches the ceiling and dominates the darkened room. The doctor is calm and composed, his sensitive hands rest limply on the arms of the chair. His eyes which have studied the past, stare dreamily ahead in an endeavour to visualize the future. They gleam with a spiritual light which pierces the penumbra surrounding him. He is thinking, he gazes—unseeing—at a little picture on the wall, a little Dutch picture on which the artist has, centuries ago, painted the moon rising from behind dark clouds to illumine with rays of silver a limitless ocean. He sighs, straightens up, throwing his head slightly back. Then his colourful, warm voice rises in the silence and the shadows surrounding us.

A new world is in the making. The old world had been divided by men into races, religions and creeds. Each race had different standards, each race was prejudiced against all others. Each religion and creed had, in the course of time, accommodated itself to the pettiness of humanity and had lost sight of its essential principles. The divine light which time and again God had shed in His mercy over humanity through one or the other of his prophets had been captured by narrow-minded dogmatists of different races and only an infinitesimal spark of it had been each time imprisoned in a lantern for egotistical purposes in-

stead of being used to illumine the outer world. Jews, Christians and Muslims turned their own lanterns on themselves and each one crowded around it in an endeavour to see its own particular light. In the scramble that followed and in the jet black darkness which surrounded each separate spark, those who struggled forgot what they had seen in the light. Mercy, compassion and love disappeared from before their eyes. They all called each other renegades and apostates. The Christian world, more materialistic than the others, obtained the upper hand and exerted its supremacy over the globe. But the greediness of its different nations, their desire for economic possession brought about the general war. Even in this, however, nations were the unconscious tools of the Divine Power! One must tear down to build anew. One must punish to improve. Therefore nations were made to destroy their own material riches. And in the meanwhile, unknown to them the sparks in their lanterns have come ever and ever nearer to each other. The day is near when all the lanterns will be united and will illumine together—as God meant it—the work of reconstruction undertaken by a new Humanity which has been made to see through suffering. The pains of the present time are the pains of travail. Humanity is being reborn. A new age is in the making, a better world is coming. It may take some time to come, but when it arrives it will

bring justice to all without distinction of class, colour, nationality or sex. It will usher in real democracy based not on equality, but on "oneness." We are passing now through the period of preparation, the period of travail. It is painful as all travail preceding creation, but Humanity must hope, no matter how hard the present times are, no matter how long the hard times last. Nothing can alter its destiny. The millenium will come when Humanity becomes conscious of God, becomes one with Him, reflects all His attributes: and Mercy and Love are the principal attributes of God. With his eyes cast dreamily ahead, lost in his vision, the great surgeon who fights death every day tells us of immortality through love.

Our quiet room vibrates with his subdued voice—the voice of those who have heard and understood the wails of agony. Gradually and with the conviction acquired by generations of philosophers before him, the thinker is rebuilding our faith. The faith that no true Muslim must ever lose. The shadows surrounding us are becoming translucent. We come to share his vision of a better world: a world based not on the equality but on the unity of all. We come to share his conviction that this is the unavoidable period of travail with its unavoidable pains and sorrows. We must go through it without complaint, without despair, fully realizing that we must use all obstacles in the path of humanity as stepping-stones

and not as stumbling-blocks. And God will keep His covenant to humanity. We are not fatalists, but we have faith.

Our talk continues, inspiring and elevating. How far we are, here in Stamboul, from the mundane life of Pera. Yet it is only a narrow strip of water which divide us: a strip of water called by the ancients "Golden Horn," possibly because of their foreknowledge that it would bring to Stamboul the soothing treasures of faith and belief.

But all things have an end, and it is getting late. We drink another cup of coffee, we smoke a last cigarette, and true to the Turkish custom we accompany our departing guests to our front door.

Upstairs in our room we are getting ready for the night. Full of the elevating talk of the evening, we silently prepare for sleep, the sleep which will lead our souls to the giddy heights of unconscious knowledge. Through our window we see the darkness outside. It is night. Silence reigns over Stamboul. Calm and composed, the eternal Turkish City slumbers under its dark sky where glow large Eastern stars, while Levantines and foreigners feverishly revel in unhealthy amusements on the hills of Pera. Let them do what they want as long as they leave us free to use the night for its real purpose: meditation, rest and relaxation!

It is dark outside. There is only one light in the small mosque of the Sublime Porte: its tapered minaret points to the oriental stars above which silently sparkle away centuries into eternity. Then the little door on top of the minaret is pushed open and the muezzin steps out on the ring-like gallery. It is prayer time. The cloudless sky echoes the melodious voice of the muezzin. High above the roofs of the slumbering city he calls the faithful to prayer:

“Allahi Ekber—Allahi Ekber! God is Great—  
“There is no God but God . . .”

His voice is pure as the purest crystal. He chants the greatness of God and His Unity. He proclaims in the middle of the night that prayer is better than sleep and calls the faithful to salvation through prayer. He gives his message to the four winds, and retires after having again proclaimed the greatness of God and having claimed for Mahomed only the station of Prophethood.

One by one, silently, the soldiers on guard at the Sublime Porte and a few neighbours have gotten up from sleep and made their way to the mosque. They make their ablution in the little courtyard: one must be clean to commune with God. They enter the mosque and I can see them through the open door. In unison and as one man they kneel, they prostrate themselves in adoration and then they rise and pray: arms extended, palms

upwards—standing like Christ on the Mount of Olives. Allahi Ekber! God is Great!

The prayer is finished. Perfect quiet again in Stamboul. The faithful have returned home. You can almost hear the world meditating. The mystic night unfolds its mysteries to the believers asleep.

Complete silence, calm and relaxation. The Orient is dreaming. At dawn the muezzin will again call to prayer: "Allahi Ekber."

## IX

### A NIGHT IN PERA

**S**INCE our arrival in Constantinople we had heard of the night life in Pera but we had not seen it close to. Although we lived—out of necessity—in Pera during the first months of our return, we very seldom went out. In the Summer months and in the Fall we were in the country and since we had settled in Stamboul we loved too much our own quiet nights at home to seek anything else. But when my friend, Carayanni, suggested showing us Pera at night we decided that it was almost our duty to take advantage of this opportunity of seeing it with someone who knew the place. Since the armistice Pera is so full of amusement resorts of all kinds that unless one is guided by an “habitué” one is apt to get lost in more than one sense of the word.

I think that I have already said that Pera is now inhabited by almost all the races of Europe with the exception of the Turks. The Turks have been forced out of this quarter and are certainly not keen to reenter it under its present conditions. Pera shelters all the foreigners in Constantinople, from the High Commissioners of the different na-



tions and their immediate retinues down to the worst kind of adventurers. And of course there are many more adventurers than High Commissioners. Pera shelters most of the Russian refugees, from poor helpless former nobles whose plight is a real disgrace to civilization down to the most resourcefully immoral individuals of both sexes whose behaviour is a real shame to humanity. In addition Pera shelters all the Greeks and Armenians of the city and its narrow, crooked streets are the playground and dwelling-place of a nondescript people which, for lack of better name, people have agreed to call "Levantine."

The Levantine is the parasite of the Near East. He has no country, no scruples, no morals, no honesty of any sort—in business or in private life. He is the descendant of foreign traders who have settled in the Near East at some period or other and have intermingled—not necessarily intermarried—with Greeks and Armenians or other non-Turkish elements of the country. His ancestors might have originally come to the Near East either attracted by the proverbial riches of the Orient—at a time when the Orient was still rich—or as runaways from the justice of their own country—no one knows. As foreigners always had certain privileges in Turkey the present-day Levantine calls himself a foreigner when he is dealing with the Turks or with Turkish authorities. However, when he is dealing with foreigners he

is very apt to call himself a Turk, an Armenian or a Greek. Anyhow he never will call himself a Levantine, so stigmatized is that appellation in the eyes of all who know the Near East. He generally has perfected this internationalism to such a degree that he has citizenship papers or passports of different countries which he uses indiscriminately according to his wants or the necessity of the moment. But despite all a Levantine is and remains a Levantine and should be shunned as such. Anyone who is from the Near East and calls himself a non-Muslim Turk is a Levantine, and almost any foreigner who admits that his family has been living in the Near East for at least two generations is probably also a Levantine. Anyhow Pera is the hot-bed of Levantines, who have lost all their original racial qualities and have assimilated all the racial defects of all the races living in the Near East—whose one purpose is to make and spend money and who are ready to sell anything for the purpose.

My friend Carayanni is not a Levantine. He is an Ottoman Greek. Just as a Scotchman is a British subject, so Carayanni is a Greek but a Turkish—or Ottoman—subject, and is supposed to be as faithful to Turkey as the Scotchman is faithful to Great Britain. But in the eyes of the world Turkey is not Great Britain, and Carayanni is a Greek and everyone, except the Turks, seem to consider it quite natural that he should be a

Venizelist. Foreigners call him and the other Ottoman Greeks like him who are Venizelists "patriots," and blame the Turks for not loving them. A Venizelist is a Greek who wants the downfall and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, that is to say that an Ottoman Greek who is a Venizelist is *de jure* a rebel, a traitor, who conspires for the downfall and dismemberment of the Government of his own country. When the Turks take this attitude and try to repress this intestinal strife they are accused of committing "atrocities." When Great Britain or any other Western Government quells with machine guns and hand-grenades a similar intestinal strife in their own country, they are said to make a legal repression of a rebellious or revolutionary movement. Double standards again.

The Venizelists want the downfall of the Ottoman Empire so that Constantinople may become again a Greek Byzance as it was over five centuries ago. Just because a city originally founded by the Romans happened to be Greek thirty-nine years before Columbus discovered America, Carayanni and all the Greeks claim now that it should again be made Greek. They call themselves Venizelists because they follow the principles of Venizelos who, although himself an Ottoman Greek, turned traitor to the country of his birth and adoption and became the political leader of Greece in her anti-Turkish policy. The western

powers hailed him as the greatest statesman and diplomat of the century and never give a thought to his treason or to the weakness of his claims.

But we do not mind the Venizelism of Carayanni. Like most of the higher-class Greeks he is Venizelist only in words, and he is too well bred to talk politics when he is with Turks. The higher-class Greeks are not Venizelists enough to don the Greek uniform. They know that if they did don it they might be sent to battle, and battles against the Turks are not very safe. Why should they risk their lives, why should they suffer the discomforts of following a military campaign—even at a safe distance from the front? They know that by a cunning and insidious propaganda they can get all the desired support from foreign nations. To obtain the sympathy and the moral support of certain nations which, like America, are imbued with the spirit of fair play, some of their women write sweet articles where the keynote is the loveliness of the Turks individually, their innocence, their dearness and their romanticism cunningly interwoven with stories—supposed to be personal experiences—which emphasize in descriptions if not in words, the ignorance of the Turks, their administrative or business incapacity, how they still practise slavery and polygamy, and how they commit political murders and atrocities. The broadminded but misinformed public believes in these camouflaged false accusations because of the

hypocritical profession of love interwoven with them and gives more than ever its entire sympathy and moral support to the Greeks. To obtain the active support of less broadminded nations, to secure from them all the modern war paraphernalia and all the money necessary to equip and hold under colours, against their will, the lower-class Greeks who are good enough for "cannon fodder," the Venizelists lead in some other countries a bolder, and therefore more commendable propaganda. In this way they are sure to obtain the moral and material support they want without much risk. The upper-class Greeks like to play safe: the only battles they fight are in their clubs and around the green table of diplomacy, and the most deadly weapon they use is their tongue—which is a pretty deadly weapon at that! So they continue, day in and day out, to endeavour to Byzantinize Constantinople and, while happily they have not succeeded in the whole city, their efforts have been—for all practical purposes—crowned with success in Pera. In the old days Pera was more than half Turkish. To-day scarcely one out of every fifteen people you see in its streets is a real Turk. At the armistice all the non-Turkish elements have been given a free hand in this part of the city by the Inter-Allied police, and rather than submit to the arrogance of the Armenians and to the hostility of the Greek mobs, rather than witness the general débauche, the

Turks have withdrawn to Stamboul or to the heights of Nishantashe. A Turk does not feel properly protected in Pera. He feels that he would get little protection from an Inter-Allied policeman if it came to a litigation with a foreigner, and only a very few Turkish policemen are now employed in Pera where their exclusive duty is to regulate traffic.

So Pera has become, under the benevolent eye of its Inter-Allied police, the heaven of Greeks and Levantines and Carayanni, being a Greek, lives in Pera and knows it from A to Z. He has invited us to dinner, and as we know that he will not talk politics, as we want to see Pera at night, and as we could not find a better guide for the purpose, we have accepted his invitation.

One dines very late in Pera and when we start on our trip of exploration it is already night. We left home well after eight. On our way to meet Carayanni we had to pass through Galata, which shelters behind its façade of business respectability sordid back streets patronized by sailors of the international merchant and military navies now crowding the harbour. While banks and office buildings in the main street are closed at this late hour we have glimpses of side streets which would make the Barbary Coast of San Francisco blush with envy. Intoxicated sailors rock from side to side and disappear in little streets where organs grind their nasal notes of

antiquated French, Italian, yes, even American popular songs and where harsh feminine voices greet prospective friends in an international vernacular. A foreign sailor, more intoxicated and more excited than the others, jumps on the running board of our carriage. It is a good thing that the top is up, as in the darkness he does not see that I am a Turk and when I push him and shout in English for him to get out he obeys without a sound, probably thinking that I am an Englishman or an American who could get protection from the police.

My wife is frightened, but the really dangerous part of our route is nearly over. We are leaving Galata behind. Our carriage climbs the hill of Pera and soon we pass before the Pera Palace, the leading hotel of Constantinople, now owned by a Greek, where foreign officers and business men are fêted by unscrupulous Levantine adventurers and drink and dance with fallen Russian princesses or with Greek and Armenian girls whose morals are, to say the least, as light as their flimsy gowns. Right next to the hotel is the "Petits Champs" Garden where soliciting by both male and female pleasure-seekers is now so aggressively indulged in that not even a self-respecting man dares any more to venture in the place.

The streets are also full of pleasure-seekers, but at this hour they are not yet as aggressive as in the Garden. They walk slowly eyeing

each other with greedy or inviting glances. Among them hundreds of Russian refugees, derelicts of modern civilization, are drifting sadly, their emaciated bodies clothed in rags. Maimed men in old uniforms—on which you can still detect the insignias of the high ranks they obtained on the battlefields when they were fighting to make the world safe for democracy—are now peddling little wooden toys or artificial flowers which they try to sell to passers-by. Old women—and also a few young ones who prefer to be street vendors rather than street walkers—are selling candies and newspapers. At one corner a sad young woman, who will be a mother soon, holds in her hand a bunch of multi-coloured toy balloons. She is so tired that she leans against the wall and can hardly move her hand to offer her balloons for sale. Huddled on the curb and in porch-ways, little children shivering from hunger and from cold, are begging or trying to snatch a few minutes' sleep before the Inter-Allied police come and tell them to move on. Fourteen or fifteen-year-old little girls are parading arm in arm and patently offering their youthfulness in competition with the experienced knowledge of their elder sisters. Prostitution, dishonesty, misery and drunkenness are openly flaunted in this section of the city which revives all the vices of Byzance coupled with those of Sodom.

And all this under the very eyes of the Inter-



Allied police who have occupied the city in the name of civilization and to enforce order and law. Never before were Pera and Galata as disreputable as now, never before were they so unsafe, so objectionable and so badly policed; the Inter-Allied police professes that it does not care to mix in matters that have no direct bearing on politics, and the Turkish police has had its authority completely taken away in this section of the city.

At last, through this repulsive maze of vice, we arrive at the Russian restaurant where we are to meet Carayanni. Pera is now full of Russian restaurants, where a money-spending international crowd revels in so-called Bohemian life. Why not? The walls are artistically painted and the furniture queer looking enough. Of course, like most amateur Bohemians, the only thing which this international crowd has adopted from the Quartier Latin of Paris is free love. Anyhow, with the punctuality of a perfect host, Carayanni is waiting for us. Well groomed and prosperous-looking in his dapper London-made clothes, he is trying his best to look and act like an Englishman. His polite nonchalance and his general appearance are so perfect that, despite his dark complexion, it is hard for me to realize that this is the same man who, before I left Constantinople about ten years ago, was making only a very modest living in gambling and card games in which he always was an expert. He has changed

his business, however, during the war and is now one of the most successful food speculators in town.

Carayanni has a special table prepared right near the center of the room and on our way to the table he stops to greet the waitresses and to gracefully kiss their hands. Most of these girls are supposed to belong to the Russian nobility, so in Pera it has become the custom to kiss the hand that feeds you. We take our seats and glance about the room. As a whole the place is almost respectable. The crowd is the usual mixture seen now at night in Pera: mostly olive-skinned, thick-lipped, dissipated Armenians and Greeks who can afford high-priced restaurants, thanks to their unscrupulous war and post-war profiteering; many foreigners who can the better afford to spend in view of the low rate of exchange of the Turkish money; a few Americans who love to indulge in foreign countries in pleasures forbidden to them in their own either by puritanic traditions or by the eighteenth amendment. The food is excellent; we have a taste of "vodka," the Russian drink, while at other tables imported and local wines of rare vintage are consumed copiously. The professional entertainment provided consists of an excellent gypsy orchestra, the best I have heard anywhere, a few singers who sing some weird Russian songs and an interpretative dancer who interprets better than she dances. In be-

tween the professional numbers those who desire to dance can do so in the middle of the room which remains cleared for the purpose. After all, it is the same kind of cabaret restaurant that one finds in London, Paris or New York, except that its performers are Russian, its waitresses are supposed to be princesses and its crowd is a little more "Bohemian."

Of course Carayanni finds it too slow and as we are finishing dinner he suggests that we go to a show. At one theater the Greeks are giving a performance for the benefit of their refugees and at another the Turks are giving a performance for the benefit of their refugees and as our party to-night is both Turkish and Greek we must not hurt the feelings of each other by going to either of these shows. Carayanni suggests adjourning to a certain "club" which is the rage of the moment and where plays and actors are so—"unreserved," that the public is required to wear masks. Naturally I object to this suggestion: my wife and I are, so to speak, provincials from Stamboul and our blushes would glow even through our masks. My wife is so shocked that Carayanni is sorry to have ever suggested it and he proposes hastily to go to see Scheherazade which is played by some of the former actors of the imperial ballet corps of Petrograd. We all decide in favour of this and we adjourn to the theater.

The play has already started. Here again there

are only a very few Turks in the audience and their presence seems to me as incongruous as mine must seem to them. It is queer to see the place crowded with foreigners when but a few years ago the crowds in theaters were almost exclusively Turkish. I remember that one of the last times I came to this very theater it was to assist at a gala performance given by the Municipality of Constantinople in honour of the Young Turkish leaders who had just then so successfully accomplished their democratic revolution. The place was then covered with Turkish flags and humming with Turkish enthusiasm. To-day it is almost entirely Russian. Really, the dream of Peter the Great of making a Russian city of Constantinople has partly come true, but it has turned into a nightmare. I whisper this to my wife and, unknown to Carayanni, we both express the wish that any one who might nourish the ambition of taking Constantinople away from the Turks might share a plight similar to that of the Russians. It is not generous, I admit it, but if we were not Turks and formed the same wish for the enemies of our country, people would call us patriots.

The performance is pretty good but it drags on. Scheherazade is a spectacular play and neither the theater nor its staging are adapted to such plays. The actors might have been in the Imperial Ballet of Petrograd but they certainly were

not principals. So we decide to leave before the performance is over. This time Carayanni insists that we go to a regular café chantant. He will take us to the best one; it is an open-air affair but the weather is really not so cool to-night as to make it disagreeable. We have to take a carriage as it is at some distance, on the hills of Shishli.

This café chantant is in a garden. In the center, where orchestra seats should be, are small tables, with chairs in semi-circle facing the stage. It is a regular theater stage and on both sides of the garden, boxes have been built. It is crowded. Every one seems to be intoxicated and the weird music of a regular jazz band composed of genuine American negroes fires the blood of the rollicking crowd to demonstrations unknown even to the Bowery in its most flourishing days before the Volstead Act. Much bejewelled and rouged "noble" waitresses sit, drink and smoke at the tables of their own clients. The proprietor of the place, an American coloured man who was established in Russia before the Bolshevik revolution and who—it seems—protected and helped most efficiently some British and American officers and relief workers at the time of the Revolution, is watching the crowd in a rather aloof manner. Frankly he seems to me more human than his clients; at least he is sober and acts with consideration and politeness, which is not the case with most of the people who are here. Not one

real Turk is in sight. Many foreigners, but mostly Greeks, Armenians and Levantines—with dissipated puffed-up faces, greedy of pleasure and materialism. We have a liqueur. The show is a vaudeville which is not very interesting. Every minute that passes makes the crowd more and more demonstrative. Carayanni is enjoying it immensely, but I realize that our presence puts a damper on his good time and although he defends himself in the most exquisite manner when I tease him about it and accuse him of being evidently an “habitué” of the place, the glances that he exchanges surreptitiously with one of the waitresses—a real Russian beauty with pale skin, fire-red lips and languid black eyes—confirm my suspicions. My wife does not enjoy herself, and she is tired: our life in Stamboul has evidently made her lose her taste for late hours. Besides she has never seen this kind of night life anywhere and the atmosphere is getting decidedly too tense for us. A “parti carrée” enters a box—and immediately pulls the curtain, thus cutting itself entirely from the view of the public. My wife looks at me in surprise. We really must go.

It is too early for Carryanni, the night has just started for him and for the other regular Perotes. So we insist that he should not spoil his evening and we apologise for our departure. He is heart-broken to see us go but asks permission to remain,

protesting that he has some very important business matters to talk over with a friend of his whom he has just seen in the crowd. We understand perfectly well and take our leave.

We step out of the gay garden. At the curb a long line of automobiles is waiting. We take one as it will get us home quicker than a carriage. Besides, the streets of Pera, and especially of Galata, are not very safe at this late hour, and the quicker one rushes through them the better.

Pera is tossing in her sleep, nervous and restless. A few night-owls of both sexes who evidently have not yet been able to find a branch to their liking are still wandering on the sidewalks. The porches and doorways of nearly every house are crowded with groups of children and refugees, half-naked, sleeping cuddled up together to keep warm. In restaurants and amusement places the merry-makers are continuing their revels.

Galata again, her narrow streets still lit up and still resounding with sinister noises. Now the bridge, almost deserted, and then at last Stamboul, our Stamboul, the beautiful Turkish city, sleeping in the night the sleep of the just; poor Stamboul, ruined by fires and by wars, sad in her misery, but decent and noble; a dethroned queen dreaming of her past splendour and trusting in her future.

## X

### CONSTANTINOPLE, 1922

**T**HE night life in Pera sketched in the past chapter constitutes, naturally, only one aspect of the present-day so-called social life of Constantinople. In full justice to the inhabitants of the city I must say that it is only the "Perotes," that is, only those who inhabit Pera—be they foreigners, Greeks, Armenians or Levantines—who find pleasure in this kind of distraction. The people of Stamboul lead the quiet life which I have already described. And in between these two extremes there are, of course, quite a large number of foreigners, of Turks and of non-Turks who do not participate in this kind of life but who nevertheless seek distraction in the society of each other in a more rational and decent way than the Perotes—if not quite as sedate as their friends of Stamboul.

Pera is the theatrical and the red light district of the city. Stamboul is the residential district of the more conservative Turks, that is to say, the Turks who are modern enough to set aside all the antiquated customs of their ancestors who—



by preventing their women from participating in the every-day life, had handicapped the social progress of the race—but who are not and do not care to be modern to the point of adopting indiscriminately all the social customs, good and bad, of the Occident. Fortunately for Turkey, the Turks who belong to this group constitute the greatest majority. They are serious-minded people, progressive without exaggeration, desirous of adapting to their own temperament and customs only those foreign customs which are desirable. They do not seek to imitate blindly western nations. They do not care to be over-westernized. These Turks realize that with all its superiority over the Oriental structure, the social structure of the West is far from being perfect, and they do not propose to introduce and adopt customs which either might be incompatible with their temperaments and traditions or which have been and are strongly criticized by well-thinking people even in western countries.

Besides Pera and Stamboul, the two opposite poles, there is another district of the city where certain foreigners live and some native non-Turks, and quite a few Turks who do not mind over-westernization. This district comprises the quarters of Taxim and Shishli and a certain portion of Nishantashe. It is situated on the hills north of Pera and is considered by some to be the modern residential section of the city. For those who

really love Turkey and the Turks or even for those who are only interested in the Orient it has, however, not much charm or attraction. Modern apartment houses and new residences built in concrete or in stone, but which have no distinctive character, adorn its wide avenues and its smaller streets. The architecture here has no individuality whatsoever, judging by the external appearances of the buildings and by the aspect of the avenues and streets, with electric street cars running, with automobiles and modern garages one might be in any city of Europe. All speak of modernism and those who inhabit it worship anything that has the stamp of western civilization. However, if one desires to lead any kind of social life comparable to that of western countries one has to come to this district and one has to identify oneself with the social clique which dwells in it.

So, as my wife and I are both human, as we are still young and desire once in a while some kind of mundane distraction, we have had to frequent—if not extensively at least moderately—this section of Constantinople. One glimpse of a night in Pera had been sufficient to make us realize the necessity of finding other playgrounds. We had to break, once in a while, from the quiet, peaceful and elevating life of Stamboul if it were only to make us appreciate more our normal home life.

Shortly after we had settled in our house a

cousin of mine who lives in Shishli gave an afternoon tea to introduce us to his set. He is a prominent business man of Constantinople, and both his own position as well as the prominence of his family have placed him and his charming wife among the leaders of the Turkish social set of Shishli. They have an attractive house on one of the principle avenues and entertain frequently. His wife, like all the Turkish ladies of her set, has a weekly "at home." On these days one is sure to find a large crowd of callers in her salons. She is a perfectly charming woman, very young and beautiful. Her beauty is typically Turkish, tall and slender although not emaciated, languid black eyes with long eyelashes. She dresses exquisitely as she buys most of her frocks in Paris where she goes periodically to renew her wardrobe. At the time they gave the afternoon tea in our honour they had just refurnished their house with furniture purchased on their last trip to Italy and France. It was the first tea of the season and my cousin and his wife told us that all their friends were very anxious to meet us. As theirs is a dancing set the news that a Turk, freshly landed from America with his American wife, would be present at the tea had created quite a sensation; they were all keen to see the latest steps danced in the States. The dancing reputation of the Americans is world-wide and the fact that my wife was an Ameri-

can had stirred the interest of my cousins' friends. As for me, they imagined that any one who had lived in America for such a long time must of necessity be a good dancer. Only a very few of the members of this set were known to me, and that very superficially, as I had met them as small children when I had previously been in Constantinople. Now most of them were married and had children of their own. So when we arrived 'at my cousin's house we had to be introduced to every one. My cousin, Salih Zia Bey, and his wife, Madame Zia Bey, did the honours in that most exquisite modern Turkish fashion which, despite all its westernization, has still kept something of the ceremony characteristic of the old Turkey.

We were ushered in by a tiny Javanese maid. The drawing-room was crowded. Both my wife and myself felt the strain of being the guests of honour. We were somewhat conscious that we had to live up to the expectation of our new friends and try not to disappoint them too much with our terpsichorean abilities. Madame Zia Bey received us at the tea-table, which was really a sort of large buffet piled with delicious pastries, cakes, sandwiches and biscuits of all kinds. Tea, coffee or a delicious punch were served according to the taste of the guests. It was as elaborate as the cold supper buffets one sees in America at large dances.

Madame Zia Bey, her sister-in-law and two other young ladies who were helping the hostess to serve, were the only ones who did not have the "charshaf"—all the other ladies wore this most becoming headgear which is made of the same material as the dress and fits tightly around the head, while its two flowing ends, which enclose the shoulders when the ladies are in the street, hang loosely behind them when they are in the house. Over the head a flimsy veil—generally some precious lace—is thrown backwards at a rakish angle and frames the face, which remains entirely uncovered, in a softening cloud. After serving us with some tea and cakes, Madame Zia Bey passed us on to her husband who, one by one as the occasion arose, introduced us to the guests. Later the introductions were finished by Madame Zia Bey who joined us after she had served all her guests at the tea-table.

We were glad to see a few of our friends from Prinkipo and the Bosphorus but the majority of the guests were, of course, new to us. There were two young men, two brothers, who were introduced to us as the two "tango champions" of the set. I must say that they are very nice young boys and, despite the fact that they dance most exquisitely, they are not at all the type of dancing men one meets elsewhere. Their sister was also there, with her fiancé. I wished that some of my American friends who absolutely refused to

believe that the custom of arranging marriages between girls and boys who had not previously met was a thing of the past in Turkey could have seen this couple. Mademoiselle Rashid Bey and her fiancé had known each other for some time and their marriage was the result of a genuine romance in which no outsider had interfered.

There were only two or three foreigners among the guests, and the most prominent of them was the Japanese Ambassador, who is quite popular in the social circles of Constantinople. The Italian military attaché was also present as well as a French officer. A Greek lady whose husband is one of the very few prominent Greeks who have remained openly faithful to the cause of Turkey was also there. Needless to say that she and her husband are very much liked by the Turks who recognize their real friends and show them true gratitude under all circumstances. The rest of the crowd was exclusively Turkish, all most attractive and genuinely refined people who had kept, despite their extreme westernization, the good manners and the good breeding characteristic of their race.

When everybody had duly partaken of the delicacies and refreshments offered at the tea-table, we adjourned—with the slight touch of ceremony prevailing in all Turkish gatherings—to two spacious drawing-rooms on the same floor. And, as we expected, the informal dancing started

to the sound of a gramophone of the latest model imported from America. It was a surprise for us to see how extremely up to date everybody was. Charming Turkish girls were dancing the newest steps as expertly as débutantes of New York, London and Paris—with a little more decorum, perhaps, and certainly with less “abandon,” but that did not in any way hurt the effect. Quite on the contrary it gave to modern dances a degree of respectability which is not always found in the West.

One other difference that we found was that the tango still reigned supreme here. It was played at least seven or eight times during the evening. But after seeing the excellence with which everybody danced it my wife and I were quite reluctant to give a demonstration of our own limited abilities. We had to immolate ourselves, however, and although we did our best to come up to expectation, I am not quite certain that we entirely succeeded. Of course I had to explain that I should not be personally taken as an exponent of the American art as I was not and never had been an expert in dancing. My wife saved the day for America by tangoing with the real experts as perfectly as only an American girl can.

This tea-party at my cousin's was our first experience of Turkish social life. It was to be followed by many others during the winter. As I have said before, all Turkish ladies belonging

to this set have a day at home every week and if one cares to go out extensively one has somewhere to go practically every day. While we did not indulge in daily social activities this gave us the opportunity to go out every once in a while—about once or twice a week—which afforded us a pleasant change from our more serious and much quieter life of Stamboul, without obliging us to seek distraction by frequenting even at long intervals the unhealthy amusement places of Pera.

Thus the Turks have found a way to amuse themselves among their own people exclusively and while, of course, some foreigners are asked to the parties of these small Turkish sets it is only a very few of them—carefully selected—who are privileged to frequent Turkish society. I am ready to admit, however, that to my mind the selection of these foreigners should be done even more carefully as I share entirely the views of my aunt, explained in one of my former chapters, that the foreigners who are at present in Constantinople are not as a whole very trustworthy and that it is very difficult to distinguish among them those who can be, without any objection, taken within our homes. All the more because the Turks are racially extremely hospitable and they are therefore apt to show too much confidence and to become too intimate with those they take in their midst. Many other races, many other civilizations have gone down just because of their pure and



unsuspecting hospitality toward foreigners. The Turks cannot be blamed for their present attitude. In fact, if they are at all to blame it is that some of them are even too careless in their extreme desire to become entirely westernized and despite the fact that I consider myself extremely liberal in my ideas I entirely endorse the Turkish National Assembly of Angora for remonstrating periodically with the Turkish inhabitants of Constantinople for mixing too freely with foreigners and for adopting too indiscriminately their customs. Right in the middle of the 1921-1922 season the Turkish papers published broadcast such a remonstrance of the National Assembly and although many of the ill-disposed foreign newspapers took advantage of this to harp on the xenophobia of the Turks ruling in Anatolia, it really was for the purpose—very justifiable and commendable—of reminding the people of Constantinople that they should respect and honour any and all of their national traditions which did not hinder the continued advance of the nation toward progress and real civilization. A reminder of this is an absolute necessity and has to be uttered periodically, as the people of Constantinople live at present right in the midst of every kind of imported vices and immoralities and the first duty of a nation for the protection of its vitality and its vigor is to see that the virtue of its people is not contaminated.

Naturally, in view of their environment, the Turks of Constantinople are in danger. The greatest majority of them have so far escaped contamination by segregating themselves in Stamboul and in Nishantashe but there are some who need to be called to attention once in a while as the temptations in their path are too great. In justice to them I am bound to say, however, that judging by what I have seen they keep their morals and virtues unimpaired despite their gay and sometimes rather "advanced" appearances. But still the danger is there and a periodical warning is a very good measure.

Most of the Turkish social activities and entertainments are held in the evenings, that is, from tea-time to about dinner-time. The Turks, even those who live in Shishli, have neither the means nor the heart to entertain elaborately, and big dinners or official receptions or dances are much too elaborate affairs for them to undertake. So they are satisfied with tea-parties with dancing—tango-teas they are called—such as the one given by my cousin. The evening entertaining is done exclusively by the foreign diplomatic missions and by some prominent foreign business men. I am, of course, talking exclusively of social entertainments which are refined enough for the Turks to participate in. The other evening entertainments offered by the professionals of Pera or by the doubtful social set of Perotes—Greeks, Ar-

menians and Levantines—are not taken into consideration.

The foreign diplomatic missions give once in a while special receptions for the Turks to which are also invited the officials, the representatives and the nationals of the countries which are, if not at peace at least not at open war against the Turks. For instance, at any of the receptions where Turks were invited Greek officials and Greek nationals would shine by their absence and, according to the wind which blows over Turco-British relations, British officials were absent or present if the latest declaration at the House of Commons was to the effect of reinforcing the English support to Greece or else had taken the colour of a revival of the traditional British friendship towards Turkey and the Muslim world. The shifts in international policy make the official social life in Constantinople a very delicate matter indeed, and the host or hostess who plans to give a large reception and is obliged to make the necessary preparations considerably beforehand has unquestionably a very hard task, as no one can foresee, a few days in advance, what the prevailing international policy will be on the day the reception is given. The only reception that I know of which was given with a total disregard of international relations and at which all officials and prominent citizens of all nations were invited was the reception given at the Persian Embassy in honour of

the Crown Prince of Persia. And despite all, it was the most successful reception of the season in Constantinople.

The Crown Prince was on his way to France and was to stay only a few days in Constantinople so that the Ambassador could not possibly give several receptions to which he could have separately asked the different warring nations. To ask only some at the single large reception he was obliged to give would have alienated the friendship of all those who had not been invited. So the Persian representative bravely decided to ask everybody without distinction of nationality and without regard to the political situation, and let events take their course.

Naturally, events were powerfully helped by the "savoir faire" and the courtesy of the Persian representative and of his wife who were so charming and hospitable to all their guests that every one enjoyed the reception most thoroughly. Of course we were all anticipating with much curiosity the experience and were anxious to see how it would turn out. The Persian Embassy is in Stamboul, only a few doors from our home, and the fact that the wife of the representative was an American and that we knew them both in America had established most cordial friendly relations between them and ourselves. So we were delighted to comply with the request of Her Excellency the Khanoum, who asked us to come

early so as to be present when her first guests arrived; and soon after dinner my wife and I made our way to the Embassy.

The Persian mission is located in a big building which had been repainted for the occasion. It is in the center of a large garden and has a gorgeous view of the Bosphorus from over the Sublime Porte. Over the big entrance gate of the garden it has the Persian emblem, a lion and a rising sun. The garden had been decorated for the occasion with flags of all nations and multi-coloured lanterns, while on a mast in the center floated majestically a huge Persian standard. Concealed among the trees a Turkish Naval Band, graciously loaned by the Navy Department, was playing different pieces of music. Attendants in Persian uniforms with small black kolpaks received, on the marble steps of the Embassy, the arriving guests. We were among the first to come and it gave us an opportunity of admiring the rich antique Persian carpets with which the enormous entrance hall had been decorated. The whole place was covered with shimmering hangings, carpets and rugs and with plants and rare flowers. At the top of the stairs stood the Khan and the Khanoum with the entire staff of the Embassy, all in uniform and decorations. The Khanoum wore her beautifully embroidered Persian court gown and her diamond decorations and greeted us with the ineffable charm which has

won for her the hearts of all who have met her in three continents. She took my wife by the hand and brought us into one of the principal salons from where we could have a view of the gardens. She informed us that the Crown Prince was resting in his private apartment on the floor above, awaiting the arrival of the principal guests to hold his court. As the guests were now arriving the Khanoum returned to the head of the stairs to greet them.

From where we were we could also see the central hall where a special dais had been built to serve as a throne for the Crown Prince. The guests were placed in the different drawing-rooms, according to their individual social or official position, the most important ones waiting in the first drawing-room and the others in the drawing-rooms behind. Soon the Naval Band outside was playing the different national anthems of the different diplomatic representatives as they were coming in. One of the first to arrive was the British High Commissioner and his wife who took their place right at the door of the drawing-room where we were waiting. After a few minutes and as the band was starting the Turkish National Anthem, which indicated that the personal representative of the Sultan and of the Crown Prince of Turkey had arrived, the Persian Crown Prince came in and took his place under the dais with his brother and the Khanoum on his right and the

Khan and the Turkish Grand Master of Ceremonies on his left. Every one stood at attention. The Crown Prince is a young man, dark and good looking with a small, closely clipped black mustache. He looked slim and tall in his tight-fitting long black court dress, and appeared that evening somewhat tired and nervous, which after all was quite natural considering that he had just arrived from a very long and tedious trip across the Persian deserts, Bolshevik Caucasia, and the Black Sea. As soon as he had taken his place the Turkish Mission was ushered in and I am frank to admit that I was proud of the appearance of our representatives. The Sultan was represented by his Minister of Foreign Affairs, General Izzet Pasha, an imposing man of about fifty, with gray mustaches, his fez slightly tilted on one side giving a martial expression to his distinguished and refined face. The Turkish Crown Prince was represented by his son, Prince Omer Farouk Effendi, an athletic young man in the uniform of a cavalry lieutenant, tall and well built, blond hair and blue eyes. They were both surrounded with young officers who clicked their heels martially when they were being introduced to the Persian Crown Prince. After the Turkish Mission the foreign missions were introduced one by one according to the seniority of their respective heads and when the British Mission had closed the official train—the British High Com-

missioner being the most recent foreign appointee in Constantinople—the turn came for the other guests. Because of our privileged position in the first drawing-room our turn came immediately after the official missions and when we made our reverence to the Crown Prince he cordially shook us by the hand and addressed us in a few kind words in French. We then passed into the big ballroom where all the guests had gathered, and the painful ordeal of all official receptions, where you have to greet with stereotyped words the different people you know, began. But it did not last long at this reception, as there was informal dancing and as soon as the music started the ice was broken and the usual relaxation set in. We danced a little and we watched the crowd which was the most interesting agglomeration of official people one could see anywhere. Even the Greek Mission was present, but its members had the good taste to disappear soon after the dancing had started. Prominent diplomats of all nations and dashing officers in resplendent uniforms were talking and joking with each other as if the war had never taken place, or if peace had really been established. But the most stunning figure of all and the one which attracted the most attention, was unquestionably that of a young Arab prince, cousin of Emir Feiçal, King of Mesopotamia, and direct descendant of the Prophet Ma-



homed. The prince, or more correctly the "sher-eef," as his real title is, was clad in a flowing robe of silk and had the Arab headgear, a white silk cover tightly bound on the head by a band of gold threads and loosely floating on the shoulders. We were talking with some American friends, a dear old lady of the Middle West and her husband who is a teacher at the American Robert College, when the Shereef recognized me and came to speak to us. Naturally, I introduced him to my wife and our friends, and as he spoke English most fluently, as he looked most romantic in his robe, and his blond beard gave a Christ-like expression to his aristocratic features, our friends were visibly very much impressed by him. When he left us the lady of the Middle West, all a-flutter, asked me who he was—and could not conceal her terrible disappointment when I informed her he was a "Shereef"! The dear old lady confused the title with the functions of a sheriff charged with the keeping of the peace in English-speaking countries, and her disappointment as well as the ignorance of her husband, who did not correct her, amused us so that we did not explain, and to this day I imagine that they both are firmly convinced that sheriffs in Turkey wear too gorgeous and too impracticable uniforms.

Towards midnight the doors of the dining-room were opened and every one went down stairs to

have cold supper. The crowd was such that despite the rather chilly weather of the season many wandered in the gardens. It is here that I was for the first time introduced to His Highness Izzet Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was later to show me many marks of friendship. He of course knew my father and my family and immediately put my wife and myself at our ease by stating that he wanted to be considered by us as an "Uncle." This is a mark of extreme courtesy in Turkey and we were, and have been ever since, duly grateful to Izzet Pasha for this and for his subsequent real friendship. Be it said in parentheses that Izzet Pasha is one of the ablest statesmen of Europe, broadminded, most progressive and democratic.

As the crowd was thinning we had an opportunity to talk some more to the Persian representative and to the Khanoum who were justly delighted with the remarkable success of their reception. They had dared to bring together all the representatives of different nations at war and of nations who had not yet concluded peace and they had been most successful in their endeavour. This was especially remarkable as it took place right in Constantinople which is and has been for many years the center of international intrigues, political rivalries and petty jealousies. We could congratulate them therefore most truthfully. They took us back into a small sitting-room on the first

floor where we had a few minutes private audience with the Crown Prince who courteously expressed the hope that we had enjoyed the reception. Upon learning that my wife was American he stated his admiration for the United States which he hopes to be able to visit some time. It surely would be a very good thing for the world if through visits of this kind the western world was placed in a position to know and appreciate the Orient. The American idea of an Oriental potentate would surely be greatly revised if Oriental princes such as the Persian Crown Prince and the Turkish Imperial Princes came to America and entered into personal touch with the people.

Of course the Oriental feminine element was entirely absent from the reception at the Persian Embassy, the Persians being in this respect much stricter than the Turks, their women do not go out in society. And as Persian ladies were not to be present, Turkish ladies also remained away. But this is not the case at the receptions given by the other Embassies, especially the American Embassy.

The United States High Commissioner and his wife give every season a series of entertainments to which they ask in turn the different nations represented in Constantinople. This solves very diplomatically the always ticklish problem of bringing inadvertently together representatives of na-

tions who are not on good terms. The receptions given at the American Embassy are always most enjoyable and I can say without exaggeration that among all the foreign representatives it is the American High Commissioner and his wife who are the most liked—and liked indiscriminately by all—in Constantinople. Whenever they give an entertainment to which the Turkish society is invited the drawing-rooms of the Embassy are filled to full capacity as all the Turks who are asked want to show their appreciation by coming to the party. The company is always the most representative gathering that one can see in Constantinople. At one of the “*thé dansants*” they gave recently there were, besides all the Turkish Government officials, not less than four Imperial Princes and three Princesses. It surely is a sign of the times and proof of the emancipation of Turkish women to see at a large reception a Turkish Princess, a niece or cousin of the reigning Calif, freely talking to strangers.

It is always at the American Embassy that one sees the largest collection of Turkish ladies. Americans are very much liked by the Turks and many of the younger Turkish generation have been educated at Robert College or at the Constantinople College, the two American educational institutions of Constantinople where young men and young women are educated according to an

American program. It was at one of the teas given at the American Embassy that we met one of the principals of Robert College, and he and his wife having asked us to tea the following week and having promised to take us through the college we were delighted to accept their invitation.

## XI

### ROBERT COLLEGE

**R**OBERT COLLEGE is situated at the most picturesque spot on the Bosphorus. It dominates the narrowest part of the waterway and its many buildings are on a hill, above the very place which was selected by the Turks nearly six centuries ago as the strategic spot to build their first fort for the conquest of Constantinople. The ruins of the old fort are still there.

Although the electric cars run from the city almost to the very door of the college, we took an automobile, both because we wanted to time our arrival and because we did not desire to climb through the park of the College up the hill where its principal buildings are. We left Stamboul with some American friends who had also been asked and, at times skirting the quays, at times taking the road behind the old palaces, we followed the winding contour of the Bosphorus. All the villages here constitute the real suburbs of Constantinople and follow each other almost uninterruptedly nearly to the shores of the Black Sea. One of the first things that attracted our attention soon after we had left the city proper were the buildings of

the American Naval Base where are kept all the stores for the United States warships. The principal nations keep such stores at present in Constantinople, the harbour being used as a base for their warships engaged in the international control of the straits. America maintains only a few small craft in the Near East; therefore, its naval base is much smaller than those of the other nations but it is nevertheless quite an extensive organization where are stored canned products of all kind, fresh food, as well as deck and engine-room supplies. A few squares from the American Naval Base is the Imperial Palace of Dolma Baghtshé, the official residence of the Sultan.

It is an elaborate and large palace in stone and marble, within a beautiful garden surrounded with high walls and wrought-iron gates. I remember having entered it during the reign of the late Sultan. I was struck by the enormous size of its halls and rooms, by the luxury of its priceless carpets, rugs and hangings, and by its gallery of pictures which includes the most important collection of paintings of the famous Russian artist, Aivazowsky. It had been collected by Sultan Abdul Aziz and is now greedily coveted by many European museums, who will, however, have to be satisfied just to covet it as Turkey does not sell its national art possessions. Passing before the Imperial Palace I could not help comparing mentally its present appearance to the way it looked when

I had previously visited it. At that time the place was full of life, the large gates were wide opened, and the gardens were crowded with military aides and chamberlains busily going and coming. Now the gates were closed, a lonely Turkish sentry was pacing up and down, guarding the empty palace, and through the wrought-iron bars I could get only glimpses of its forsaken gardens. My American friends asked me why the palace was now so tightly closed and easily understood the reason when I called their attention to the fact that most of the largest foreign warships had to be anchored in the Bosphorus right in front of the Palace as the inner harbour of Constantinople is too congested with trade to make it practical for battleships to stay there. No wonder, therefore, that the Sultan prefers to live temporarily in the summer palace of Yildiz Kiosk which is located outside the city, on a hill far away from the sight of foreign warships whose propinquity would be too vivid a reminder to the sovereign of the plight of his nation.

A little further on we passed before the gates of another old palace which has now been converted into an orphan asylum, where hundreds of Turkish war orphans are being cared for by the Committee of Turkish Ladies for the Relief of Orphans. Poor little boys, ranging from six to fourteen years and uniformly dressed in khaki tunics and long trousers, were pitifully standing



and watching the passers-by. They did not even seem to have any desire to pass their few minutes of recreation in playing and running in the gardens, as all other children of their age do in all other countries. Truly Sherman was right in his definition of war, and he would have even forged a stronger word if he had seen the consequences of war in Turkey!

Finally we arrived at Bebek, with its pretty little public garden, its tiny harbour where small yachts and skiffs are peacefully lying covered with tarpaulin for their winter sleep. From here to the lower gate of Robert College is only a very short distance and within a few minutes our car swung through the gate and up the road winding its way to the top of the hill. The climb is pretty steep and I pity the day pupils who have to negotiate it every morning on foot. Of course the teachers claim that this is good exercise for the boys. There is a building at the foot of the hill, right near the entrance gate, which was originally meant as an abode for some of the teachers and principals of the college. It has perfectly splendid accommodations, but few of the teachers live here as they naturally prefer to live on top of the hill. Our hosts had their domicile in the hospital building which is right below the large terrace at the very summit. So before we reached this terrace our car swerved around and stopped at the door of the hospital.

We were directed to an apartment on the ground floor where our hosts received us and, after the usual greetings, served us tea and some delicious American homemade cakes. All the furniture in this apartment—as throughout the whole college—is imported from America, even to the window frames. Provided one does not look out of the windows one could easily believe oneself to be in an American home of the standardized “bourgeois” type. Everything, even to the mahogany-finished mantelpiece and the book-cases to match, speaks of America, the middle class America cut out of immovable patterns. The furniture itself is also American and reminds you of pictures you see in the anniversary sales periodically advertised in newspapers. The eternal rocking-chair is, of course there, and on the center-table the latest *Ladies' Home Companion* rests peacefully side by side with the latest *Saturday Evening Post*. Truly this is a little corner of America, possibly not a corner of the progressive America which leads the world in things artistic, intellectual, scientific and political—possibly not a corner of the good old consistent America, puritan in her tastes, but which has for generations given to the great Western Republic millions and millions of hard-working farmers, traders and navigators, Empire builders—but a corner of the average America which abides faithfully to standardized taste.

The general conversation started naturally by talking about America, the land of the free, and how everyone wished to be there; how much comfort one had in America and how little of it one had in Europe, especially in Constantinople; how the American colony in Constantinople had increased since the war, and what a blessing it was to have now so many Americans whom one could visit and whom one could talk to; how the American colony was sufficient to itself and how one could pleasantly and interestingly pass away the time by seeing only people of one's own kind with whom one could speak without the necessity of employing an interpreter or without being obliged to watch oneself continuously so as not to make a break. Of course this question of language is a serious consideration to the Americans; as most of them speak only English they have comparatively few people they can talk to in foreign countries. Our host, however, remarked that through the good work done by Robert College and the Constantinople College for Girls, who were both striving to spread education and the light of truth, the number of English-speaking "natives" had greatly increased. Our hostess pointed out how bright the young "native" children were and how easily they picked up language, education and religion. They suggested showing us through the college grounds and buildings and so we all got up.

Our tour started by stepping out of the French windows into the little terrace, where an old fashioned New England flower garden had been transplanted on these distant shores. The hedges were not high enough to completely mask the gorgeous Oriental view. Seeing we were so much interested in the panorama, our hosts suggested our going on the roof of the Hospital Building where we could see it without any obstruction. As we passed through the drawing-room our hostess pointed out to us the genuine Turkish and Persian carpets she had been lucky enough to purchase through the uncle of one of the pupils who had a shop in the Bazaar. She considered them as a real bargain and she proudly told us the price she had paid. Of course we did not say anything, but my conscience was only set at rest after I found, through skilful investigation, that the pupil whose uncle had a shop in the Bazaar was an Armenian "and one of the cleverest little fellows we have." Our hostess showed us also, hidden in a corner near the door and patiently awaiting the eventual return of its owners to America where it could be shown to friends from Michigan or Wisconsin as exhibit A of a quaint collection of Turkish antiques, a brass brazero, another bargain purchased from the Armenian uncle of the clever little pupil. It seemed that this man through his good services to our hosts had been recommended by them to many of their friends and had furnished to

several of them similar bargains. No wonder that the family of the little boy prodigy could afford to send him to Robert College.

We climbed the stairs of the building and stopped on our way in the hospital room, a perfectly equipped place with all the comforts devised by modern science and kept immaculately clean. And as we climbed one more flight we reached the door of the roof, a spacious flat place with an indented parapet built according to the best principles of American neo-mediaeval suburban architecture. Here we had the view, and words fail me to depict its gorgeousness. Imagine if you can a limitless horizon extending far into the transparent azure of a limpid Eastern sky, deep into the snow-covered mountains of Anatolia, which are, however, so far away that they almost seem at this distance to be below your level. All around in the country are little bouquets of trees which, with each slender minaret, represent the location of a small village. Nearer, but still on the Asiatic shores, are the green hills of the Bosphorus with their summer residences and their uninterrupted line of homes by the water, while below are the green hills of the European shore. With the blue water in between and the blue sky overhead, the picture is unforgettable. We admired it in silence while our hosts told us of their little country house in America, near a little pond whose waters are as blue as the waters of the Bosphorus.

We descend from the terrace and we are taken to the principal buildings of the college through its splendid grounds. The park is beautiful and well kept and is crowned with an enormous terrace, facing East, from where we have another view totally different but fully as gorgeous as the one we had from the Hospital Building. That is the beauty of the Bosphorus: its aspect changes from any spot that you stand on, its every hill, its every house, its every nook and every corner has a different outlook, each one more beautiful than the other. It completely does away with the monotony that any panorama, no matter how beautiful, generally has.

Right behind the terrace are the playgrounds of the college, large lawns with special accommodations for all kinds of games: football, tennis, croquet, and of course basket-ball and baseball. Around these grounds and facing the Bosphorus in a semi-circle are the principal buildings of the College where the class-rooms, the dormitories, the dining-rooms, laboratories, gymnasiums, etc. are located. We go through some of them. They are all spacious, well-ventilated and bright rooms, and each is equipped according to the latest dictates of hygiene and science. It really is perfect in every detail and no modern college in the United States can muster any better accommodation.

Our host is justly proud when we compliment

him on the College. As they are taking us back to our motor he walks with me and expresses his personal disappointment in not having a larger number of Turkish pupils.

"We have pupils from all the nations of the Near East," he says, "but the largest quota is provided by the Armenians. We have, however, quite a few Greeks, we have even Bulgarians and Roumanians who come here from their distant countries, we have Caucasians and Russians, but barely a few Turks. I do not understand why more Turkish families do not send their children to be educated and brought up by us. The Turks desire to acquire modern education, they are unquestionably good workers and progressive. Ours is, I believe, the best College in the Near East, we have excellent teachers and our courses are as complete as any of the American Colleges back home. Still the Turks don't seem to care to send us their children. They seem to admire the Americans, they desire to know us better, to make themselves better known to us. They seem to be sincere in their wish to understand us better and to have themselves better understood in America. Still only a very few of them send their sons to the only American College here and they prefer to send them to Galata Serai which is a college run by the French and where French education is imparted."

On our way back in the car, I was thinking

over these parting remarks of our host and as I noticed that the American friends who accompanied us had been impressed by them I decided to tell them of my own experience, when years ago I was called to choose between Robert College and Galata Serai as the educational institution to which to send my younger brother.

To appreciate the full meaning of my action at that time and of the reasons that induced me to act that way, I must first say that as my father was in the diplomatic service I have grown up in foreign countries and have myself received a foreign education. My childhood and early youth, I passed in Rome, where French, Italian and English teachers prepared me for taking my French degrees. I also had a Turkish teacher who taught me my own language. As far as religious education is concerned although I studied the Koran, being a Muslim born, I also studied the Bible and other Holy Books. My religious education was therefore most liberal and according to the true Muslim principles, which as I understand them and as they are interpreted by all broadminded Muslims, are all-inclusive of all other religions. And recognizing the one Almighty God and all His prophets, I never hesitated to go into any church of any denomination and therein raise my thoughts in prayer. In fact, having passed the greater part of my life in foreign countries I have more often prayed in churches than in mosques.



Well about fifteen years ago, and after I had finished my studies, I was engaged in business in Constantinople while my father was transferred from Rome to Vienna. My father was obliged to choose between either having my younger brother start again his studies, with German this time as a basis, or else sending him somewhere where he could continue his studies either in French or in English, both of which he knew. Naturally my father preferred this last course and decided to send my younger brother to Constantinople where he could follow either the course of Robert College or that of Galata Serai, and he asked me to investigate both colleges and to make arrangements with the one I recommended the most.

I went first to Galata Serai, the program of which I already knew, having myself taken the official French degrees. I knew that the education one received in French schools was somewhat too theoretical and I personally was not therefore in favour of my brother following it. But to have a clear conscience I visited the college and had a talk with the principal. Of course I found the class-rooms and dormitories good enough if not very modern, and, as I expected, I found that athletics and sports were much neglected. As for the program of studies I found it as cumbersome as the one I had taken.

My next step was to go to Robert College where

I was received by the then Dean, who very courteously showed me all around. I was most favourably impressed by the great attention given to athletics and sports as well as by the most modern and hygienic buildings, the working quarters and the living quarters. As for the program of studies it did not take me long to realize how much more practical it was than the French program, how boys graduated from an American College stepped into life better equipped to face all modern problems than those graduated from European Colleges. I therefore made up my mind and told the Dean that I would most forcibly advocate the sending of my younger brother to Robert College in preference to Galata Serai. As a last word, and so as to make everything clear, I asked the Dean if, seeing that there were no classes from Saturday noon to Monday morning, the College would object to allowing my brother to visit his family from Saturday to Sunday evening. The Dean replied that while he had no objection to my brother's visiting his family on Sunday afternoons it would not be possible for him to go home on Saturdays, as one of the few unbreakable rules of the College was that all pupils should be present at Sunday service. Despite all my arguments to the effect that my brother was a Muslim and that, to be fair, he should at least not be obliged to attend any religious functions until he had reached the age of reason and could then choose

freely the creed he wanted to follow, the Dean informed me that he was very sorry but Muslim or no Muslim it was an unbreakable rule that all pupils should go to church on Sundays and he could not possibly make an exception in favour of any Muslim pupil.

This rule seemed to me so narrow-minded, and apparently such an unjustifiable attempt to try to force, to coerce young children into the fold of one church and one creed in preference to any other, that I was struck by its narrowness in comparison with the broadness of my own education. As a result my brother went to Galata Serai. And hundreds, possibly thousands of other Turkish boys are sent yearly to Galata Serai in preference to Robert College for this very reason. Americans should not take the lack of participation of the Turks in the educational campaign they lead in Turkey as a reason to doubt of the desire of the Turks to acquire modern education or as a proof that they are not sincere when they claim that they want to be better known by the Americans and want to know them better. This lack of response on the part of the Turks should be rather attributed to the fact that all Turks like any civilized nation, resent the activities of foreign missionaries especially when these missionaries try to impose on their children a religion which is not their own, and try to mold young minds into accepting the dogma of an alien church.

When I explained the foregoing to our American friends they understood exactly the situation and they agreed with me that the greatest handicap for the spread of American interests in the Near East is the fact that all of the American educational enterprises are conducted by missionaries, who, under the guise of offering modern education, endeavour to convert people to their own denominations. The Constantinople College for Girls is conducted on identical lines, as far as religion is concerned, with Robert College. And there is no doubt that if instead of having Colleges for Girls and Boys conducted by missionaries the Americans maintained non-sectarian schools where modern science was taught and education imparted without consideration of religion they would render a far greater service to humanity and culture. Irrespective of religion, creed or denomination they would help in forming in the Near East new generations of modern men and women.

Unfortunately the Constantinople College for Girls has become, since the armistice, more unpopular among the Turks also for another reason, and that is that despite the fact that the United States was never at war with Turkey, despite the fact that the Turks had treated all American institutions most correctly and in a friendly manner during the war, all the teachers and American employees of the College did not hesitate to manifest

openly their pleasure at the sight of the arrival of the Franco-British fleet in the harbour of Constantinople. Together with Greek and Armenian pupils they waved flags and handkerchiefs, they cheered from the windows of the College the battleships of the then enemies of Turkey without consideration of the feelings of their Turkish pupils. To all the Turkish girls the sight of the entrance of the Franco-British fleet in the Bosphorus meant the realization of the defeat of their country, and they still resent the fact that their teachers, whom they had until then considered as friendly Americans, cheered with joy in celebration of the defeat of Turkey, the country which had extended them a most courteous hospitality during the worst years of the war.

It is, of course, true that, fortunately for both countries, there are in Turkey quite a few Americans and American institutions or enterprises which are moved by truly American broadmindedness and are imbued with a true spirit of fair play. Those are the business and Governmental institutions, and it is most remarkable that all of the Americans who do not have to depend for their living on the continuance of an anti-Turkish campaign, are out and out friendly to the Turks and openly in their favour. The Turks see this and can discriminate between the two groups. They are duly grateful to those of their American guests who show rectitude and fairness in their judgment.

They are especially grateful to the American High Commissioner and to his assistants who are more liked than any other foreigner in Turkey. The other Americans are also very much liked, even the missionaries, but it would unquestionably better serve the interests of America in the Near East, and civilization as a whole, if there were less missionary and more non-sectarian American enterprises.

I believe that the American friends who were with us and who had been in Constantinople on business for quite a while realized perfectly well what I meant when I said that in my opinion the most desirable thing in the interest of the two countries would be the appearance of an American Pierre Loti. It can be said that the indestructible friendship between France and Turkey, and especially the fact that it has survived the war, has been cemented by the work of this great French writer. He has taken the trouble to study the Turks, he has come and lived with them—not in Pera, but in Stamboul, in the heart of Turkey. He has lived as one of them for years and has learned thoroughly their qualities and their faults. He has knocked and has been admitted, he has opened his heart and all hearts have opened to him. And after having thus equipped himself he has gone back to France and has endeavoured to impart his knowledge of the Turks to his countrymen by writing unbiased novels and books. He

has, as all novelists, romanticized his message. As the real poet that he is, he has shown Turkey and the Turks through the coloured glasses of poetry. He has perhaps added a few things here and erased a few other things there. But he has made the heart of Turkey talk to the heart of France and they both have come to know and love each other, without prejudice, without religious thought.

A single American Pierre Loti, would render, in the long run, much greater service to the interests of his own country in the Near East and would more efficiently serve the cause of civilization than all the organizations at present engaged in trying to make converts and succeeding only in showing partiality in favour of the people of their own religion by helping and succouring Christians although thousands of destitute Turkish refugees might be dying at their very doors.

After all Pierre Loti has used his exceptional talents as a novelist and poet to bring about a personal touch between the French and the Turks. Is there not an American novelist or poet who is willing to render the same service to his own country? And if there is anyone whose talent is equal to that of Pierre Loti and who has the courage to publish his opinion as the French novelist has done, he can thoroughly count on all the help, assistance and gratitude of the whole Turkish race, much maligned in American literature.

Pierre Loti has become immortal through his works on Turkey. The people of Constantinople have built a monument, a fountain, in his honour and have named one of the principal streets of the City after him. His name is cherished by millions of Turks who treat him as a friend, as a brother, when he comes to Turkey. What is most needed for the American propaganda in the Near East is an American Pierre Loti.

Not that the works undertaken and conducted by American enterprises in Turkey are not very laudable in themselves. But they are as insufficient to promote a good and thorough understanding between the two people as the activities of the French missionaries were before the advent of Pierre Loti. The French Frères and Sisters of Charity had many schools, many hospitals and orphans asylums where they were doing very good work for many generations. But it took a Pierre Loti to establish the personal bonds of friendship between the two people and to promote, by this fact alone, all French interests in Turkey. He has made the masses of his countrymen at home know and appreciate the Turks at their true value. The work of an American Loti would be the crowning glory of all American enterprises in the Near East.

I explained to our friends that this was my personal opinion only, and that I knew that the



Turks appreciated fully the work that American organizations were at present conducting in Turkey, and that my desire to see an American Pierre Loti was exclusively due to a very legitimate wish of seeing my country and my people better known in America, known more intimately and more thoroughly through the eyes of an impartial writer rather than through the eyes of people who might have certain interests in keeping alive the false reputation of the Turks.

Our American friends agreed implicitly with me and pointed out that what surprised them the most on their arrival in Constantinople was to find that all the Americans who were in business or in non-religious work and who had had an opportunity to know the Turks had become without exception real friends of this maligned race. They said that a careful investigation would establish the fact that all those who have written or spoken against the Turks had done so for an ulterior personal motive. And they deplored with me the fact that no great American novelist had as yet come to Turkey and popularized in his own country the knowledge of the Turks as they really are.

Thus saying we arrived at the hotel where our friends were stopping and upon their expressing a desire to find out more about Turkish schools and Turkish educational institutions, I promised

to arrange for them to visit some of the exclusively Turkish schools and colleges and to take them to call on people who would be able to tell them about modern Turkish education better than I could. And we parted until the following week when I was able to keep my promise to them.

## XII

### EDUCATION AND ART

**I**T was very easy to assist my friends in the investigation they wanted to conduct for their own private information on Turkish schools and the educational system of Turkey. My father had been twice Minister of Public Education and he was in a position to give all the information desired. My first step was, therefore, to take our friends to him and have him explain the present educational system in our country.

Contrary to what is generally believed in foreign countries education is obligatory in Turkey and there are fewer illiterates among the Turks than, for instance, among Russians and other Near Eastern people. This is principally due to the fact that all Muslims have considered it their duty ever since the time of the Prophet Mahomed to learn how to read the Koran. Unfortunately, however, this religious principle was taken too literally by the average Muslim who, for centuries was satisfied to learn just the alphabet, as he imagined that as long as he could read the Holy Book he was accomplishing his religious duty. In the course of time, therefore, when other nations

besides the Arabs embraced the Muslim faith, the people who did not know Arabic were also perfectly contented to be able to read the Koran even if they did not understand its meaning. All Muslim countries having adopted the Arabic alphabet this very elementary education placed even the greatest majority of non-Arab Muslims in a position to read their own language. But it was only a very restricted higher class which took the trouble of studying its grammar. Thus for centuries only a limited number of Turks—as was the case with the Muslims of other nations—were learned enough to read and write fluently their own languages, although the greatest majority knew enough of the alphabet to be able to read the Koran and to sign their names.

Of course this restricted knowledge of reading cannot count as education, but when it is considered that the science of reading was so neglected among the nations of the West that practically up to the period of Louis XIV very few of the Western nobles knew even how to sign their names or to decipher the simplest document, it will be admitted that anyhow the rudimentary knowledge of the East was preferable to the almost total ignorance of the West.

However, as in everything else, Turkey made very little progress in this matter of education during the nineteenth century with the result that while the percentage of people who had acquired

a high school education had increased in a very large proportion in the West, the past generation in Turkey had still only the same proportion of educated people as it had a century ago. The number of people who knew the elementary principals of the alphabet was as considerable as before, and was proportionately much larger than the number of people who had this elementary knowledge in Western countries. But the percentage of really educated people was proportionately much smaller in Turkey than in the progressive Western countries. In other words, although complete illiteracy was almost non-existent in Turkey, education was the property of a comparatively small number of people. The educational level of the people at large was, and still is, much lower than the educational level of the people of Western European nations.

This explains the reason why one can see even to-day in the streets of Constantinople, generally in the courtyard of the mosques, public secretaries taking letters from old men and women of the lower classes, poor people who do not know grammar enough to write their own letters but who nevertheless are able to spell their names or to laboriously decipher a printed document. And it is no wonder that foreigners are generally sceptical when told that the number of total illiterates is very small in Turkey.

Much has been done, however, during the last

generation to spread education in Turkey and a new system of schools has been grafted upon the old system which consisted almost exclusively in small public schools—"Mahallé Mektebi" or District Schools as they are called—where small children are taught the rudimentary principles of the alphabet.

These District Schools exist by the millions all over Turkey, in cities as well as in the country. Each mosque—and there are millions of them—has its own private District School where the imam or clergyman teaches the children of his district, boys and girls, how to read the Koran. The classes, if they might be called by that name, are mostly held in summer in the courtyard of the mosques and in winter in a room which, for lack of a better name, we will describe as the vestry. It is obligatory for every family living in the district and it has been obligatory for centuries, to send their children to these schools if they cannot afford to give them a private education. Needless to say that these schools are absolutely gratis.

The District Schools of Turkey are a sort of primitive community Kindergarten from which games and plays are strictly banned. Their purpose is to teach children how to read the Koran, and reading the Koran is a very serious matter. So, for two hours every day except Fridays little boys and little girls from five to about eight years old go to the mosque of their district where

the classes are held. Sitting on the ground in summer and in winter on straw mats, they form a circle around their teacher, the imam of the district, who teaches them in a monotonous chant the secrets of the alphabet. They squat on their knees, these little boys and girls, and repeat the chant of their teacher, keeping time with their little bodies which they swing slowly backwards and forwards. And beware of a mistake! The little pupil who makes one, who indulges in a childish prank or who does not behave according to the severe discipline which must be respected by everyone who is learning how to read the Koran or who is in the exalted presence of an imam, is reminded of his misdeed by the swift application of a long, willowy stick on his hands or on some other part of his anatomy. The teacher keeps this stick right next to him, right under his hand, and is very quick to use it.

The alphabet is first memorized, each letter being accurately described. Of course the Turkish alphabet is different from the Latin alphabet, but the system could be applied to the Latin alphabet more or less as follows: "A is a triangle with a bar in the middle"—"B is a vertical bar with two circles on the right"—"C is a crescent facing to the right." Thus the whole alphabet is described in a monotonous chant for days and months until the pupils can visualize it thoroughly. Then the sounds of syllables are memorized according to

the same system and it is only after this has been done thoroughly that the children are permitted to apply the knowledge they have thus acquired by memory. They are each furnished with a Koran and they are taught to read it aloud. Of course, as the understanding of the text of the Koran requires a thorough knowledge of Arabic, they do not understand what they read and those who desire to acquire this knowledge have to go to the Medressé or theological schools, of which we will talk later. The purpose of the district schools is exclusively to teach them how to read, and when this is done the course of the district school is finished.

In the old days obligatory education only extended as far as the district school. This is not so any more. During the past twenty-five or thirty years the Government has created high schools in the principal cities and towns of the country, where modern education is imparted as well as the restricted means of the impoverished nation allows. The courses of these high schools are also free and their program is meant to prepare the pupils for college studies. They are obligatory only for boys. The system is good enough, but for lack of funds and for lack of peace, the Government has not been able to apply it thoroughly and to extend it as much as it was originally expected. The study of foreign languages is only optional and very theoretic in these schools



where only the elements of arithmetic, grammar, literature and history are taught.

The next grade is the college which corresponds to the French Lycée and which is an absolute adaptation to Turkey of the French program. The first college of this kind in Turkey was Galata Serai which was organized nearly half a century ago and has ever since kept pace with the French Lycées. As its diploma is recognized by the French Government as equivalent to that of any Governmental French College this institution is a sort of joint Turco-French enterprise and is used as pattern by the other Turkish Colleges. Upon the invitation of the Turkish Government the French Ministry of Public Education organized Galata Serai and the French cooperation in this non-sectarian and exclusively educational institution has continued ever since its formation, regardless of wars or political entanglements. The French language is of course obligatory and the study of another foreign language is encouraged. The principal courses are given during the first three years in Turkish and during the last two years before graduation in French. An institution of this kind, but with the cooperation of America and where American teachers and principals should take the place of French teachers and principals, would do more for the spreading of modern education on practical lines, for the advancement of civilization by bringing up future

Turkish generations capable of rationally adapting to the Near East the principles of democracy as conceived by the Americans than many missionary schools.

The other Turkish Colleges are modelled after Galata Serai, with the difference that while French or one other foreign language is obligatory all courses are given in Turkish, and their teachers and principals are Turks. Although these institutions are not free the tuition fees are so nominal that the Government is obliged to subsidize them. At present the fees for the yearly courses are equivalent to about a hundred and fifty dollars, including lodging and food, and for the purpose of making it easier to the very much impoverished population the Government consents to a substantial discount on these fees to the children and relatives of Government employees.

Here also lack of funds has greatly hampered the organization of these colleges throughout Turkey. While it was the original program to open one such college in every city, the Government has been able to organize and maintain only about five of them throughout the country, and as only three are for boys and two for girls it can readily be seen that they do not suffice for the requirements of Turkey.

In addition to these schools and colleges there are in Turkey many academies and universities where college graduates are able to specialize in

the different branches they have selected. Most of these academies and universities are in Constantinople, and while the greatest majority are supported by the Government some of them owe their existence to private endowments.

In late years, that is up to the Armistice, the Government had given special attention principally to two institutions: the Naval Academy and the Medical Academy. The signing of the Armistice with the consequent dismantling of the Turkish navy brought, of course, a great setback to the Naval Academy which is now fighting for its life against tremendous odds. Naturally the navy of Turkey being reduced to practically nothing very few families desire to send their children to the Academy. In addition the foreigners who control Constantinople do not look with a very favourable eye upon the maintenance of this Academy for fear of its keeping alive a militaristic spirit. They do their utmost to encourage its closing. This is the more regrettable that in the last fifteen years the Academy had been reorganized so thoroughly that it was in all points comparable to any of the best high-grade educational institutions of the world. As its manager told me once, the purpose of the Academy was to form real men so that the cadets who had graduated would be in a position to enter into any branch of modern activity in case they decided, after their graduation, to quit the navy. The best proof that the Academy has

most efficiently lived up to this principle is that after the Armistice and when the fleet was dismantled all the naval officers who were obliged to leave the navy succeeded in making a living, and many of them have been most successful in their new activities as business men. It would be a shame if an institution which had so markedly succeeded in forming a generation of real men was obliged to close its doors. An institution for forming generations of real men should not be allowed to die just because of the dismantlement of the fleet.

The Medical Academy is another institution which has done a most efficient work of civilization in Modern Turkey. It can be said that the Turkish "intelligentsia" consists mostly of doctors and medical students. The generation of Turkish physicians which the Medical Academy has formed has taken a lead among European medical circles and many are the Turkish doctors whose knowledge, activities and discoveries in medical science have earned them professorships in France and Germany. The Medical Academy, which is situated in a large modern building near the station of Haidar Pasha, the headline of the Bagdad Railroad, is completely equipped with all the requirements of modern science. It also maintains special courses for nurses, which are now very popular among Turkish women.

It would be tedious to talk at length of all the

industrial schools that have been organized in the past ten or fifteen years in Turkey. Suffice it to say that quite a number of them are in existence. But a special mention should be made of the two universities of Constantinople as they are up to date in every respect. One of these universities is exclusively for women, the other is open to both sexes, and any one who has seen a mixed course where young Turkish women, in their becoming tcharshaf, sit on the same benches and study side by side with men students can only wonder how the legend of the seclusion of Turkish women can still receive credence in foreign countries.

In concluding his rapid outline of Turkish schools and the Turkish educational system, my father mentioned the different art schools which are now prospering in Turkey as well as the medressés or theological schools where the Muslim religion is taught. I could see that our American friends were especially interested in these two subjects and as we were leaving my father's house I was not surprised to have my impression confirmed. They wanted to know more about Turkish art and they wanted to learn something about the Muslim religion. Of course I cannot say that this surprised me.

Whenever the word "art" is pronounced in connection with Turkey, it awakens in the mind of the westerners, especially the Americans, only carpets,

embroideries and laces, and dark-skinned, thick-eyebrowed Armenian merchants trying to sell at exorbitant prices these dainty art works of the Orient—purchased by them for a song generally from some poor women who have used their eyes, their health and their time for the ultimate purpose of bringing some soothing touch of colour into the modern homes of Europe and America, and many many dollars, pound sterlings, or napoleons, as the case may be, into the bank accounts of the dark-skinned, thick-eyebrowed merchants. Even to an American or a westerner who has been in Turkey as a tourist the word “Turkish art” does not convey much more. In addition to carpets, embroideries and laces he may visualize some musty copper brazero, some delicate handwritings with painted arabesques of flowers, some richly painted porcelains or embossed leather bindings. All things which spell old age. In modern art he would only visualize some Oriental jewels—made in Germany! Few are the foreigners who think of Turkish art in the light of regular paintings, architecture or music. And when they hear of art schools their curiosity is excited.

As far as the Muslim religion is concerned westerners are, as a rule, even more ignorant on this subject than on that of art. They think of the Muslims as unbelievers, as pagans who deny God and the Christ, as fatalists who calmly await the fulfilment of the prophecies without

having enough sense to get out of the rain even when it pours. The only activities they give the Muslims credit for are massacres and atrocities. They believe that theirs alone is a religion of love and mercy while that of the Muslim is one of fire and blood. I remember that an American from Pittsburg, upon hearing that I was a Muslim, asked me what god I adored, and absolutely refused to believe that I adored the One Almighty God. He had heard that we prayed to Allah. Say what I would I could not at first explain to him that "Allah" in Arabic means God in English, and he was only half convinced when I told him that at that rate the French were also unbelievers as they prayed to "Dieu."

But the request of our American friends was not one that could be immediately satisfied as I had to make the necessary arrangements to visit the art schools and medressés and I had to await an opportunity to put them in contact with people who could tell them more of Turkish art and of the Muslim religion than I could. It was therefore only a few days later that I could arrange to take them to the Academy of Art of Constantinople, the principal school of its kind in the Near East, where no other city—not even Athens, which is still considered as the cradle of art—can boast of as complete and progressive an art academy.

The academy is located in the Park of the Old Seraglio, right next to the Imperial Museum.

They are both under the same management, and as we arrived on the large plaza, shaded by old trees, we were received by the secretary of the manager, a cousin of mine, whom I had asked to show us through the place so as to give all available information to our friends.

He took us through the building where different classes for drawing, painting and modelling were being held in different rooms. The class-rooms are large, all whitewashed and lighted by skylights and big windows. The whole place is kept immaculately clean. The students are quite numerous and our American friends were surprised to see that there were as many Turkish girls studying art as men. "We always thought of Turkish women as hothouse flowers," they said, "and we were very much surprised to see when we arrived here how many of them take an active part in business and in the every-day life of the community. We imagined that those who were thus active were doing it out of necessity because they had to earn a living. We could not conceive that Turkish women would work of their own choice, and especially would spend time in studying art which, after all, is a luxury."

Kadry Bey, the secretary of the manager, smiled and said: "Woman is the materialization of art: is it surprising that, now that Turkish women have acquired their entire emancipation, they should desire to study a science the knowledge of which



gives a better appreciation of their own attribute, beauty? As soon as these classes were opened to Turkish women only a few years ago, they flocked in great number to take full advantage of the opportunity and you can judge for yourself how hard they are working. Some of them have already acquired a certain renown, and one of them, a former pupil of this academy, Moukbilé Hanoum, has just written us from Switzerland where she is visiting, that one of her pictures had been awarded a medal at an international exhibition in Berne."

As our guests wanted to know if there were no galleries or exhibitions where the work of Turkish artists could be seen, Kadry Bey told them of the bi-yearly exhibitions which are regularly held in Galata Serai under the auspices of the Turkish Crown Prince. "His Highness Prince Abdul Medjid Effendi, heir to the throne of the Sultans and future Calif of the Muslims, is an accomplished artist himself," said Kadry. "He is one of our most active leaders and enjoys a reputation as a painter even in France. His pictures have been often exhibited at the Paris Salon and there also a Turkish artist has received the highest recognition for his work. Only a short time after the armistice one of the pictures of our Crown Prince received the gold medal. This is unquestionably a palpable proof of the artistic value of His Highness's work as the

Committee of the Paris Salon is composed of the greatest living artists in the world. It is also a splendid illustration of the saying that art has no country as French artists did not hesitate to recognize publicly the value of this painting by our Crown Prince so shortly after the war. If you are in town when the next exhibition is held at Galata Serai I strongly advise you to visit it. You would see there pictures by our most prominent artists, as O. Hikmet, M. Refet, Tchalizadé Ibrahim and others, whose works are as good as any of the modern artists. Most of them follow the classical school and very few indeed are the Turkish artists who practise post-impressionism and other extreme styles. You probably would have an opportunity of seeing at the exhibition the Crown Prince himself as His Highness goes there practically every day and you would surely be interested in seeing the democratic way in which he talks and jokes with the other artists."

Our friends wanted to know something more about the Crown Prince. So my wife and I told them of the time we had the privilege of hearing a few of his compositions played by the orchestra of the Imperial Palace. It was at a charity concert given for the benefit of the Turkish refugees of Anatolia. Prince Abdul Medjid Effendi was there personally and although his compositions were not included in the program, the audience asked and insisted on having them, much to His

Highness's embarrassment. As a true artist the Prince hates publicity and his activities as a painter or as a composer are not at all meant for public consumption—as were those of the Kaiser—but simply for his own satisfaction and for the pleasure of a few privileged friends.

Thus talking, we were visiting the different class-rooms of the academy. Kadry Bey introduced us to some of the teachers and to one or two of the most advanced pupils and as we finished our visit he asked us into the reception room of the manager who, being absent for the day, had asked him to have us to tea in his place.

As we had to cross the Museum we stopped on our way to admire once more the famous sarcophagus of Alexander, which is said to have contained the remains of Alexander the Great of Macedonia and which is the pride not only of the Museum but also of all Turks. Hamdi Bey, the founder of the Museum, unearthed it himself in the plains of Anatolia, not far from Smyrna, and I remember his telling me personally that he was so excited and exhilarated when he discovered this peerless jewel of antique art that for two days and one night he and his assistants worked consecutively without sleep, without food. Finally the second night arrived and as the delicate work was not yet finished Hamdi Bey fell asleep from sheer exhaustion, but lying close to the sarcophagus, in the earth that had hidden it for so many cen-

turies, so that he could at least feel his priceless find during his sleep.

The present manager of the Imperial Museum is Hamdi Bey's brother and succeeded him after his death. I had an occasion of meeting him only a few days ago and the sight of the Sarcophagus of Alexander brings back to me the recollection of this meeting. I was coming out of the Sublime Porte with Izzet Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, when we met the manager of the Museum, Halil Bey. Izzet Pasha stopped and addressed him: "I have bad news to give you," said he, "a powerful foreign group has approached me to-day and has informed me that it was willing to pay any price the Government wanted for the Sarcophagus of Alexander." Halil Bey was dumbfounded. The prospect of losing the most cherished possession of his Museum, discovered by his own brother, was too momentous, too enormous a blow. But his fears were put at rest by Izzet Pasha when the Minister added with a smile. "I have answered them that the loss of the Sarcophagus would be considered by the Imperial Government as great a loss as that of the wealthiest province of the Empire, Mesopotamia, the historic City of Bagdad and its rich oil fields not excepted, and that therefore it could never entertain even the possibility of selling the sarcophagus. No matter how poor we might be the price to be paid for the possession of the sarcophagus will always

have to be reckoned in corpses on battlefields and not in money on a counter"! This little incident gives a graphic idea of the degree of appreciation in which the Turks hold their art treasures.

As we were having tea in the reception room of Halil Bey we talked of his family and of how much the art renaissance in Turkey owed to them all. Besides Hamdi Bey, who has left an undying name in the annals of Turkish history both as the founder of the Imperial Museum and as the creator of the Art Academy, besides the fact that his brother, Halil Bey, has followed in his path and is continuing the work undertaken by him, it is worth mentioning that Hamdi Bey's son is a distinguished architect to whom is due the beautiful buildings of the Museum and of the Academy. This distinguished family has unquestionably done more for the revival of art in Turkey than any one family has done for art in any other country. And it was almost a pleasure that Halil Bey was not present as we could more freely talk of his services and of those of his family within the very walls which had been erected by them and filled by them with treasures discovered through their own initiative and work.

Our American friends admitted that this visit had thrown a different light on their conception of art in Turkey and its appreciation by the Turks, but as they were not satisfied until they had seen some other art school I took them next day

to the Darul-Elhan, the Turkish School of Music for Girls and we had the good fortune to assist in a most interesting concert. This school was founded and is being managed by Senator Zia Pasha, who was Turkish Ambassador in Washington a few years before the war. It is located in an old palace in the very heart of Stamboul. Our American friends were quite impressed by the knowledge that they were to hear and see, in the proper setting where their ancestors had been recluses, free and emancipated Turkish girls playing and singing for the benefit of strangers.

To the accompaniment of violins, lutes and long-stemmed "tambours" these Turkish girls with the full knowledge possessed only by accomplished artists and with the soft, velvety voices so typical of the Orient, sang and played a selection of the most complicated, classical music as well as charming little folksongs. Zia Pasha was there himself and as I introduced him to our friends he expressed the wish that more foreigners would make it a point, when in Constantinople, to assist at such concerts: "Perhaps," said he, "if foreigners studied our music better its reputation for weirdness and monotony would give place to one of softness and melody. Perhaps foreigners would even be able to detect in our music all the accords and measures they relish so much in modern Russian music such as that of Rimsky Korsakoff, which after all is nothing more or less than the orchestration of our Oriental music."

## XIII

### A GLIMPSE OF ISLAM

**T**HE week following our visit to the Darul-Elhan and the concert which was given there, I had an opportunity to arrange a meeting for our American friends, with the leader of one of our Muslim sects, Hassan Effendi, who had been described to me as one of the most advanced and broadminded theologians of Islam. A friend of mine who was a follower of Hassan Effendi was to take us to his house and we were to go there from our own home in Stamboul, as that was the most convenient place where we could all meet.

On the appointed day and about an hour before the time fixed for our audience with Hassan Effendi our American friends arrived. My wife was delighted to see the genuine interest they were taking in the Turks and in the Muslim religion and encouraged them in asking questions. She believes, and I think rightly, that the more intimately the Turks are known, the less credence foreigners can attach to all the malicious accounts which are being circulated by interested propagandists. She believes that the best way to

find out if the Turks are really terrible is to take the trouble to know them, the best way to prove that they are not "unspeakable" is to speak about them.

Our friends were especially at a loss to explain why, as long as there was such an active revival of art in Turkey, so few foreigners knew about it, even among those who are in Constantinople. My wife explained this:

"The trouble is," she said, "that most foreigners who live in Constantinople band together and will not mix with the people of the country. They do not take the trouble to learn the language, they do not bother to make friends with the people. They live in small, self-sufficient groups. I am sure that if they only knew how much they miss by doing this, they would revise their mode of living, and they would find out that instead of its being a trouble or a bother to learn Turkish and to make friends with the Turks it is, on the contrary, a real pleasure. Of course the Turks are also somewhat to blame as they—at least those who are not over-westernized, and they are the best—do not make an effort to mix with foreigners or to Turkicize the foreign elements who are established in their country. But after all I understand their point of view as I know how we feel in America about the foreigners who come to the States and do not assimilate. And as for "Turkicizing" even the foreign elements who are established here, we must



not forget that in all matters the world has two standards, one for the western nations and the other for Turkey. When we, in the States, endeavour to Americanize foreigners who have come to live with us, the world admires us and calls America "the melting-pot"—but if the Turks ever dare to try to apply the principles of equality of all Ottoman citizens without distinction of race or creed, the whole world jumps on them and claims that they are endeavouring to destroy the rights of minorities. Anyhow, the reason why the revival of art in Turkey is not much known by foreigners is because they have not, so far, investigated with open heart and open mind the intellectual activities now under way in Turkey. As soon as foreigners will give up their self-sufficiency, as soon as they will mingle with the people and will be willing to consider themselves as guests in the country, they will be received with open arms in Turkish communities. And then probably someone will "discover" Turkish art and it will become fashionable throughout the West, just as some years ago Russian art was discovered and became fashionable in Europe and in America."

Our friends wanted also to know how it was that, although Turkish culture did after all antedate modern European culture, as it was the continuation of the Arabic civilization of the middle ages, art—with the exception of applied art—was

only of a recent origin in Turkey. I was glad to answer to this question, as it took us into the subject which we wanted to investigate to-day, that of religion.

“Nearly seven hundred years before Protestant leaders forbade the use of pictures and sculptures in their Church, the Prophet Mohamed had similarly prohibited the reproduction of any human or animal form within the walls of mosques. Ignorant people praying before the image of a saint or of a prophet are liable to adore the material picture or sculpture rather than the spirit it represents. I believe that idolatry is a direct outcome of this human tendency. The worship of idols in antiquity and of images in certain ignorant modern communities is a deterioration of originally spiritual teachings. Therefore, to prevent the repetition of a similar deterioration by his followers Mohamed ruled that they should banish all images from places where they prayed. But this restriction was originally placed on the use and not on the production of images: silver money coined at the time of Mohamed bears the effigy of the prophet. However, in the course of time his successors went so far beyond his teachings and his example that they altogether forbade even the creation of images. Thus the coins of all Muslim rulers were made to bear their names instead of their likeness, and for centuries Muslim artists, including the Turks, devoted their genius

to creating exclusively decorative art representing writings, arabesque designs, or flowers. It was, therefore, only as education spread among the people of all classes, it was only after even the masses began to understand the true purpose of the restriction placed on the use of reproductions of living beings, it was only about ten or fifteen years ago that Turkish artists branched out into these heretofore forbidden fields of art. Thus the delay in the development of art in Turkey is due to religious reasons. But even at that I consider it salutary; after all it is much better to have in its infancy that branch of art which reproduces living beings than to have religion stained by idolatry—especially as the other branches of art were permitted to follow their natural development. No one can say that the Muslims, the Orientals, have not a keen appreciation of colour and design, no one can say that the restriction placed on art has atrophied their sense of beauty.”

As I was finishing these remarks, my friend Emin Bey, who was to take us to Hassan Effendi, arrived and we started on our way. Emin Bey speaks perfect French. He is one of the high employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but he does not know English and told us that neither Hassan Effendi nor probably any one that we might meet at his house would speak English. So we decided that I should be the translator and I told our American friends

to ask without reticence any question they might wish.

Hassan Effendi lives in Stamboul not far from the Mosque of Sultan Soliman, but on a side street. So when we reached the square—in the center of which has been built in recent years a monument to two “aces” of the Turkish Aerial Fleet who died on the battlefield—we turned to the right and entered a narrow street. We passed under the arches of the old Roman Aqueduct, at the foot of which were built little wooden shacks covered with tin plates which had been in other days Standard Oil cans. These shacks are the temporary abode of many Turkish refugees in Constantinople, people who have been left homeless either by the war or by the numerous fires which have devastated the city in recent years. Soon we reached the barren sides of a hill covered with ruins, the very center of one of these fires. On the top of the hill and a little to the left was a small group of houses clustering about each other, a little mosque and a very old mausoleum. Here also was the house of Hassan Effendi, on what used to be the corner of a street, a tiny house with whitewashed bricks, an arched porch and a covered gallery which gave on a miniature garden. Through the columns of this gallery one could see two old trees—a fig tree and a cypress—two giants which, with the climbing vines on

the old walls, gave to the whole place the aspect of the inner yard of a mediaeval cloister.

The inside of the house was meticulously clean. All the walls are whitewashed and the floors are covered with white straw matting, with no rugs or carpets, except in the corner of the central hall, where was a folded prayer rug. Probably the master prays here when he does not go to the mosque. On the windows are little curtains of white muslin, hanging loose and straight. On the walls only a few framed writings beautifully decorated. I translated them for the benefit of our friends; one says: "Only God is eternal, all else is temporary"; the other asked for Divine guidance, a third proclaimed the Oneness of God. All around and against the walls are low divans, with pillows, covered with silks of soft hues. This is the only furniture, the only luxury, the only touch of colour in the room.

We were announced and immediately ushered into Hassan Effendi's room, a room similar to the one we left. He advanced to greet us at the door. He is an old man, a patriarch with a white beard and blue eyes which have contemplated the infinite. He wore a white turban and a long flowing robe of black silk. He shook hands with all of us and as I tried to kiss his hand in sign of respect, he withdrew it hastily and placed it on his breast, a token of gratitude. He asked us to sit down and took himself a place in a corner, near the window

from where he could see the endless sky, the hills of Stamboul with all their mosques and a strip of blue water, the Golden Horn. Under his windows are the ruins of man-made buildings, ephemeral homes which were destroyed in one night of terror, leaving their inhabitants without any earthly possessions—their whole having been devoured by the flames. After every one was seated the master saluted us with his hand, each one separately: “Selamu’ Aleykum—Peace be with you”!

Coffee was served and to make us feel at home Hassan Effendi asked us to smoke. He does not smoke himself. He asked how our American friends liked the Orient and what had interested them in Turkey. Upon my telling him, at their request, that they were mostly interested in education, especially religious education, and that they wanted to know something about our religion, he turned to me and said:

“Tell them, my son, that education is one of the principal bases of Islam. The Holy Book makes it obligatory for all Muslims to know at least how to read and says that those who serve science, serve God. The early Muslims practised this teaching so thoroughly that only a few generations after the Prophet all the Arab nations of the world, united under Islam, became the center of science and civilization. Algebra, chemistry, astronomy and many other modern sciences still bear the names given to them by their Muslim

discoverers. The schools of the Muslim world were so far advanced that even to-day the West resounds with the fame of the great teachers of the Universities of Bagdad, Cairo and Granada. The West had its dark age before it came in touch with the East, and the European Renaissance started after the first contact Europe had with the Orient. Whereas the East had its dark age after it came into touch with the West, and decadence in the Orient set in after its first contact with Europe. The crusaders took away our knowledge together with the riches of Haroun-El-Rashid and of Saladin and left us discouraged, despondent and demoralized. That it has taken us such a long time to shake ourselves free from the evil consequences of the invasions we suffered is of course a little our own fault. But this is especially due to the fact that the crusades, that is, the rush of the West into the East, has continued throughout all these centuries, giving us no peace, no rest. Now that the Holy Lands have been conquered by the West, let us hope that at last we will have peace, let us hope that East and West will at last be able to work out together the misunderstanding they have had for hundreds of years and that they will be able to establish once for all the principles of unity: Oneness of God, oneness of nature, oneness of mankind—without which the basis of solid democracy in this world cannot be established.

“But tell our friends that they must not think that during all these centuries the Muslim world has remained absolutely stationary and has completely neglected education. The original Muslim educational system has continued even if the teachers were not as learned, even if a smaller proportion of people frequented the schools and universities.

“The Muslim educational system is based upon the Medressés or theological colleges. There is no Muslim community in the world which has not its own Medressé. These institutions are supported by perpetual endowments which have been made from time to time by the wealthy Muslims of the community, endowments representing mostly real estate and properties whose income is used to keep up the Medressés where students are housed and fed during all the years it takes them to finish their courses in theological science. The Medressés are absolutely free and their endowments are administered by the Evkaf which is, after all, nothing else than an enormous trust company whose duty is to take care of and develop the properties which have been perpetually donated for all religious and charitable purposes. Each deed of trust has been made for a special purpose and its beneficiary is clearly mentioned. In this way all Medressés have their own particular source of income as well as all the hospitals and orphan asylums of the Evkaf. The system is excellent



and could not be improved. What could and what should be improved is first the administration of the Evkaf trusts, which will thus allow the modernization of all beneficiary institutions, and second after the needed funds have been made available by such a reorganization, the educational program of the Medressés."

Our friends wanted to know if it would be possible to give the reorganization of the Evkaf to some American business men whose organizing skill had been demonstrated.

"In principle there would be nothing against this," said Hassan Effendi, "but I am afraid that in practise it would be impossible. Despite all their profession of Christian love, westerners have never undertaken anything in the East without its becoming soon apparent that they had an ulterior motive. Look at all the different foreign educational institutions in the Orient. Are they here just for the love of spreading education or for trying to convert our children to their own creed"?

As he was asked about the program of studies followed in the Medressés Hassan Effendi explained that while the principal aim was the study of religion Medressés were originally meant to teach all sciences. The Koran contains not only the principles on which the laws and the economic structure of Muslim countries have been built, but also the principles of astronomy—which ne-

cessitates a deep knowledge of higher mathematics—of natural history leading to the research of the species, and of ancient history. Therefore, students of the Koran have also to study all these sciences and, as the Holy Book orders them to go as deeply as possible into all the subjects it mentions, the courses of Medressés should really be equivalent to those of the highest universities. We were all very much interested to hear that the Koran explicitly states that the earth is round and that together with other planets it revolves around the sun, that other solar systems are in existence in the universe, that life originally started in water. Many other theories which have been scientifically ascertained since the time of the Prophet are also stated in the Koran although the theories commonly accepted at that time were absolutely contrary to them.

Our American friends took advantage of the turn the conversation had taken to ask a few questions on the Muslim religion. They wanted to know the difference, if any, between Mahomedans and Muslims, what the Muslim creed was, and what the title of Calif meant. Hassan Effendi answered in detail all these questions and I will try to give below if not word for word at least the summary of his answers.

“To begin with,” said he, “the appellation of “Mahomedan” does not exist in the East. It is only the westerners who, having called them-

selves Christians, or followers of Christ, have named Mohamedans, the followers of Mohamed. This, however, is as wrong and misleading as if the Hebrew were to be called "Moseans." The Hebrews do not follow only Moses, they believe also in all their other prophets, beginning with Israel. Therefore, if they were to be called Moseans it would imply that they only believed in Moses and would not be correct. This applies also to the Muslims and to call them Mahomedan is absolutely misleading. The Muslims believe in all prophets, including all the Israelite prophets and the Christ. So the term Mahomedan is wrong and is not used in the East.

"We call ourselves "Muslims" which means in Arabic, followers of Islam or followers of the Road of Salvation. This is a better appellation and I often wish that instead of calling themselves by names which convey to the average people, only an idea of a person or of a race, the different churches had chosen to translate into their own language the exact meaning of their appellation. Then there would be less difference and therefore less antagonism between religions. Take for instance the Christians and the Muslims. If when speaking a common language they both translated the meaning of their appellation into it instead of using words of Arabic and Greek origin, they would soon realize that their creed was identical. 'Christ' means 'Saviour.' A Christian

therefore is a 'follower of the Saviour.' Doesn't this term alone bring him nearer to his brother, the 'follower of the Road of Salvation'?

"In the Koran there is absolutely no difference between all people who believe in the One Almighty God, all inclusive and powerful, no matter by what name they call themselves. The only difference that is made between human beings is that all those who believe in one God are placed in one group and all those who deny the oneness of God, the Pagans or Idolaters, are placed in another. It is said that God has sent from time to time prophets to bring the people into the path of truth, that all these prophets came with a book within which the immutable principles of truth were clearly enunciated, and that as truth can only be one all the books of the prophets were the same. Therefore, all the followers of these different prophets are called "people of the Book" and they are all brothers to the Muslims. They should be treated as such and only the Pagans and Idolaters should be, if necessary, coerced into recognizing the oneness of God. That this principle was most firmly established is evidenced by the early history of Islam. In the army of the Prophet, the army which conquered Mecca and destroyed the idols of the Temple, Christian and Hebrew soldiers were fighting side by side with their Muslim brothers for the purpose of having the oneness of God recognized by Pagans. And

the Muslims never fought the Christians until the ignorant people of the mediaeval West, roused by lords and barons in quest of rich spoils and adventure, embarked on the Crusades for the purpose of 'liberating' the Holy Sepulchres from the Muslims. That might have been all right for the ignorant people of the Middle Ages, but isn't it now time for the Christian to realize that despite the fact that the Holy Sepulchres have been 'liberated' only within the last few years from the Muslims, despite the fact that for more than a thousand years Jerusalem has been under the rule of Islam, the Holy Sepulchres have fared as well under the Muslims as the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Rome has under Christians?

"The Muslims have always guarded the Holy Places in Jerusalem with as much loving care and veneration as they have guarded the Holy Places in Mecca or in Medina. Why shouldn't they? The Koran has taught us to venerate Jesus Christ. We believe in His divine mission as much as we believe in the divine mission of Mohamed. We consider Him as much our prophet as the prophet of the Christians. Our creed is based on this belief and on the recognition of all the past prophets. So there is really no difference between us and the Christians as far as we are concerned. The only differences that exist are dogmatic differences such as those which might exist even between two churches of the same religion. And in our

eyes a Christian who follows the principles of Christ and who does not deny the prophethood of Mohamed is as much a Muslim as any one of us.

"Of course we do not consider as Christians those who adore images. The Russian who expects an icon to perform a miracle is as much an idolater to our eyes as any one who adores the stone or the paint with which the statue or the picture of a saint is made. There is no difference between them and the pagans of yore.

"We Muslims go even farther than some Christians in our belief in Christ. We are taught that the Virgin Mary, in her religious ardor, was praying the Almighty to give her a son who would bring back into the fold his erring sheep and that the people upon hearing this prayer criticized and shamed her: a virgin praying for a child! 'But how little they knew the ways of God,' says the Koran. 'In answer to the Virgin's prayer the Almighty sent her one of His Angels in the likeness of a human and she begot the Christ.'

"For us, God is not material. He is the All-Inclusive Spirit which permeates all nature and the whole universe. He is the Supreme Conscious Force, endowed with all the attributes, who rules the universe. He is Eternal: He never begot and never was begotten. We believe in Him and He only do we adore. We believe in His Angels, His Holy Books, His Prophets, and in the future life. We believe that He ordains everything, our

recompenses as well as our punishments, and that there is no God but He. And we believe that Mohamed is His Messenger—who revived on this earth, as all prophets before Him, the true religion as taught by Abraham, and by Moses and by Christ.”

The master was silent for a few minutes. His words which I had been translating sentence by sentence as he delivered them, had impressed us all so much that we kept quiet and awaited patiently for more. He looked out from the window into the blueness of the sky. Then, turning again to me he said with an infinite smile: “How simple it all is, and how foolish humanity is not to understand”!

He passed his hand over his forehead in an effort to concentrate on more material subjects, he sighed and said:

“These are the fundamental principles of Islam. It does not claim to be the religion of one prophet, but the Religion of God and therefore of all prophets. Truth can only be one, and religion is truth. It is the fault of men if they have divided it into different religions, sects and churches. It is the sin of men that they have, in doing so, turned religion from its most useful earthly purpose: that of establishing the oneness of humanity, the brotherhood of all believers.

“The Muslim religion succeeded in doing this during the first centuries of its inception. It

formed the first true democracy, the first republic of modern times: the Caliphs, the chief executives of the Muslim world were chosen by election. But it went even further: it created the first League of Nations in the world—all the Muslim states, although keeping their entire independence, became a federation under the administration of a single elected Caliph and extended their borders from the Himalayas to the Atlantic. And within their borders all those who believed in one God lived in peace, every one prospered, science, industry and commerce flourished. Freedom of conscience, freedom of creeds, was meticulously observed. And Christians and Jews lived and prospered side by side with their Muslim brothers. The millenium would have truly arrived had the western nations only applied these same principles within their own borders. But they were not yet mature, they were not yet ready for liberty, democracy and unity. So gradually they undermined our own institutions. Through centuries of continuous contact and of incessant wars they spread discord within our own ranks. We became divided first into separate Caliphates, then into different nations and finally into different sects. Internal strife having set in, we were condemned to fall sooner or later under the conquering heel of the West. Decadence crept on the Muslim world slowly but surely until Turkey was left alone to face the repeated assault of the different western nations.



And the tragedy of the long agony of Turkey which has lasted ever since the sixteenth century is too well known by all of you to make it necessary for me to repeat it.

"This agony has culminated with the general war. And let us hope that now that the western nations have at last obtained what they wanted—the administration of the Holy Land by a Christian power—they will settle down to work and find out if they have any real difference of principles with the Muslim world. Islam has passed through its darkest days and now it is gradually reawakening, it is becoming again conscious of the basic truth it had reached during its first years. And sooner or later the Almighty will find humanity ready to reflect His own oneness. The time is near when all believers, irrespective of denominations, creeds or sects will establish throughout the world a real League of Nations where Christians, Jews and Muslims will live in peace, a real League of all followers of Salvation based on the only possible true democracy: the brotherhood, the unity of men."

Hassan Effendi stopped again and looked at our American friends who seemed to be very much surprised. "How little do we of the West know of the religions, the ideals and the hopes of the East," they said; "but are we alone to blame? Why doesn't the East send us some of its teachers, some of its leaders to explain to us its creed and its belief?"

Hassan Effendi smiled: "We have sent you the message of our best leader, of our best teacher and you have had it with you for nearly two thousand years," he said. "We have sent you the message of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Apostle of Love and of Mercy, the greatest antagonist of riches and of materialism. In later years we have sent you in person the greatest living messenger of the East, Abdul Baha, who warned the world years before the beginning of the war of the great cataclysm toward which humanity was headed and who preached unity and oneness as the only salvation. What good did it do? The West has always coveted the East for the possession of the Holy Land—forgetting that Palestine is an Eastern Land. Up to the last century the West has always coveted the riches of the East, forgetting that after all if the East had all these riches it was because it had worked for them. Since then, and taking advantage of the decadence into which we have fallen, the West has looked down upon the East for its lack of ambition for the possession of material things and has tried to prove its inferiority by claiming that it had not contributed to modern scientific discoveries, forgetting that while the West has discovered the telephone, the telegram, electricity and steam—all things which make material life worth living—it is the East which discovered God, His Prophets and His Holy Books—all things which

make spiritual life worth expecting. And contrary to the custom of the West, the East has not commercialized its discoveries; it has given them as a free gift to humanity. Christ was an Easterner and He gave freely His knowledge to the West. And now that the West has acquired our riches and our lands we hope that it will soon recognize that it has also our God.

"This recognition, this knowledge must, however, come to the West from within. No matter how loud we claimed it, it would not be believed. Westerners will have to come to our country and see for themselves. They will have to investigate, even as you are investigating. They will have to convince themselves that the religion taught by the Prophet Mohamed is one and the same with the religion taught by Christ. They will have to realize that any one who follows either of them is following the Road of Salvation. And then, only then, will the peace of God descend upon a redeemed humanity. I pray the Almighty that this day may come soon."

And so saying Hassan Effendi rose from his seat next to the window. It was the signal that our audience was at an end, and we all got up. We took leave from the master who accompanied us to the door where he shook hands with every one of us.

And as the door was closing we could hear his soft voice like a blessing: "Peace be with you"!

## XIV

### A VOICE FROM ANATOLIA

**N**O matter how short and succinct it is, an account of the Turks as they really are and of the Turkey of to-day would not be complete without a description of the Turks who are now so successfully engaged in fighting the supreme battle of their country on the plains of Anatolia. The foregoing pages have been devoted almost entirely to the Turks of Constantinople, to their mode of living, their ideals and ideas. But after all Constantinople is only one city of Turkey and Anatolia is the real backbone of the country.

From the shores of the Black Sea down to Broussa and Smyrna, Anatolia is an armed camp, bristling with activity. That much every one knows. How well organized these activities are is evidenced by the success the Turks have secured against such great odds. But behind the guns and bayonets, behind the steel wall which has stemmed the invasion of foreigners, there is a whole country whose borders extend as far as Caucasia and whose influence extends beyond, to the arid steppes of Turkestan and the snow-covered mountains of Afghanistan. Within

this country there are millions of Turks who, besides their military activities, the immediate needs of their armies and the political requirements of their country are living a life throbbing with enthusiasm and hopes. This is the rejuvenated Turkey, not intent in imitating, like a monkey, the customs of the West or in adopting wholesale the now antiquated political structure of Europe. It is a Turkey which realizes fully the harm that too indiscriminating a copying of western customs has brought and is liable to bring to nations whose temperament and moral standards are different, a Turkey which is well aware that its past greatness in history was due exclusively to its own unadulterated racial qualities, a Turkey which is convinced that by reviving its own customs and modernizing them to fit the requirements of the time it will better and more quickly revive its racial qualities and the grandeur of the East than by imitating aliens; a Turkey convinced that it should adapt and not adopt those of the western customs which make for modern progress and culture.

The heart and brains of this Turkey have been set up in a small village on top of the fertile plains which dominate the rugged mountains of Anatolia.

Thrice presumptuous enemies have tried with machine guns, tanks and aeroplanes, with all the destructive paraphernalia of modern armies, to seize and destroy this village in the hope that

under its ruins would be smothered the new Turkey. Thrice the Turks of Anatolia have answered: "Thou shalt not pass," and have preserved intact the sanctity of their mountains, their plains and their country from the desecration of its western foes. And despite all, thousands of Turks, leaders of the Anatolian movement, continue to live, hope and work in Angora, the village on top of the plains dominating the rugged mountains, the free capital of a free and independent new Turkey which ever since its inception has been progressing in leaps and bounds toward the leadership of the East.

An account of modern Turkey and of the modern Turks would not be complete without an account of these Turks, their mode of living, their ideals and ideas. And to obtain first-hand information on them I have written to a childhood friend of mine, Djemil Haidar Bey, who is now visiting Angora. I have received a letter from him and for fear of omitting the smallest detail or detracting from its vivid pictures vibrating with youthful vitality, I am giving here its textual translation. I have only left out those parts which had to do with matters of personal interest.

"I will now endeavour to give you the description you have asked of the Angora of to-day and of the people who are living here. I believe you visited Angora before the war. Anyhow you know that it was nothing but a village which

could boast of no more than about fifteen thousand inhabitants living in wooden shacks and mud huts, good Anatolian peasants and their families, satisfied with leading a good, peaceful life, working in their fields during the day and meeting in prayer at night.

"The general war came and as in every other village of Anatolia it drained Angora of all its male inhabitants who could bear arms. And with the signing of the armistice those of the surviving inhabitants who were lucky enough to come back found nearly half of their village destroyed by fire. "It was written," they said with a sigh, and settled down to their usual life. Little did they know that soon the most momentous events in the Near East were to make of their unknown little village the powerful center of a whole nation in open rebellion against the imperialistic desires of powerful enemies.

"But somewhere in the limitless space of the infinite the powers that rule the destinies of the world were silently acting. Events were taking shape. Turkish patriots, practically all members of the House of Representatives duly elected by the people, winced on reading the terms of the treaty of peace which the enemies of Turkey wanted to impose on their country. To accept them would have been to sign the death warrant of the country. But to refuse them and remain in Constantinople was not to be thought of. Several

of their leaders who had openly given vent to their feelings in Constantinople had been arrested and exiled to a little island in the Mediterranean where they could leisurely think over the emptiness of war formulas such as the one which enunciated as inalienable the rights of small nationalities. To organize an open rebellion in Constantinople would have been impossible; the guns of the most powerful fleets of the world were turned on the city.

"But the purpose of the Turkish patriots representing the will of the people was already fixed. One by one and unostentatiously they went as far away as possible from Constantinople, to Erzeroum on the borders of Caucasia, and assembling here a National Assembly, flung to the face of the surprised world the slogan of the great American patriots of 1776: "Give us Liberty, or give us Death"!

"However, events proved that the selection they had made for their capital was not a wise one. The Russian Colossus now ruled by the Bolsheviks was shivering under a new fever of imperialism as acute as the endemic one it had under the Tzars. It stretched its blood-stained claws to the South, and gripping the independent Turkish republic of Caucasia, implanted its Soviets too dangerously near Erzeroum. The Turks of Anatolia, the Nationalist Turks as they now called themselves, saw the danger and shivered in dis-



may. Their organization was as yet nil, the Turkish armies had been disbanded, the Turkish fleet had been dismantled, and their capital—the brains of New Turkey whose double national purpose was naturally to protect Europe from a Southeastern Bolshevik invasion and the Near East from western domination—was without guns, without cannons and without bayonets, at the mercy of Russia. The dismay in the Turkish camp was, however, of short duration. From Constantinople had arrived a great man, a great leader, a great general whose genius had already once saved Turkey at the Dardanelles. Mustapha Kemal Pasha appeared in Erzeroum and the National Assembly unanimously elected him at once to its presidency. He gave immediate orders and all the members of the National Assembly, numbering nearly seven hundred, all the civilian and military chiefs accompanied by their staffs, all the employees of the temporary Government packed up their baggage and trudged their weary way to the great Anatolian plateau accessible only through easily defensible mountain passes where the Sakaria river winds its way.

“Here, at the head of one of the very few railroad lines in Asia Minor, practically at the same distance from the Black Sea shores, the Russian Soviet’s borders, Mesopotamia occupied by the British and Cilicia then occupied by the French—all places from which an attack could have been

expected on the rear of the Nationalist armies fighting against the Greeks on the Smyrna and the Broussa front—was a small, dilapidated, half-burned village, Angora. But it was the natural center from whence the Turkish struggle for freedom could be better launched and could be defended with the greatest probability of success.

“The Turkish Nationalists wanted to build up their country for efficiency, not for luxury. They had not sought and obtained power for selfish reasons of comfort and enjoyment. So what did they care if their capital was to be a small, uncomfortable village! They had left their homes, their property and their families in Constantinople and had come to Asia Minor to put into execution lofty ideals. Their purpose was to set up in Anatolia a new state, a new democracy, a new Government of the people and for the people, free and independent—and they were firmly determined to do this against any odds. They were firmly determined not only to maintain but even to extend the new Turkey to its proper racial and economic limits so as to include, in fact as well as in name, all countries and cities peopled by a Turkish majority such as Constantinople and the districts of Thrace and Smyrna. To attain this object they had already sacrificed their personal comfort and their wealth. They were now ready to lead a truly Spartan life to secure the success of their undertaking and they did not object to selecting

Angora and to setting up here the headquarters of their fight for liberty.

"So one fine day this half-destroyed, quiet little village of Angora, celebrated only for its cats and goats, was awakened by the influx of several thousands of active, energetic and progressive men who had decided to make of it the center of their activities, a place destined to pass into history as the capital of a nation capable of "getting the goat" of the most prominent statesmen of the age who thought—or hoped—that Turkey was dead. Like the Phoenix of mythology, the Turks were reborn from the ashes of this burnt down village.

"The village was swamped by the newcomers who lodged as best they could in shacks and mud huts. As long as they could settle down to assisting the painful travail of the birth of a new government and of a new administration conforming to the wishes of the people, and of an army capable of defending the very home and the very hearth of the nation, the newcomers did not mind. The most prominent and influential statesmen and military leaders were only too glad to "pile up" under any kind of roof which could offer them shelter.

"I purposely use the expression "pile up" as it accurately describes what took place. As I have said before half of the village had been destroyed by fire so that there was barely enough place to lodge normally about two-thirds of its own inhabi-

tants. And the newcomers numbered from six to eight thousand. You can well imagine the difficulties to contend with in order to lodge all these newcomers when you realize that even now—after nearly three years and the hasty erection of many temporary buildings—the place is so overcrowded that it is common to find four or five of the most prominent citizens sharing the same room.

“You can easily realize that under these conditions there is very little social life. Besides, the work undertaken is too strenuous, the people here are too much occupied with their duties—and really in earnest about accomplishing them as well as they can—to indulge in social life. Furthermore there are very few representatives of the fair sex in Angora, and social life without ladies is not possible. Most of the women here are villagers or else nurses of the Red Crescent, Turkish relief workers and ladies otherwise occupied in assisting their husbands, fathers or brothers in the patriotic task they have undertaken. There are no women of leisure, no hostess who has enough time to entertain. It can be truthfully said that every Turkish woman now in Angora is a little Joan of Arc. And the quarters being so inadequate most of the women live together and sleep together just as their men are obliged to live and sleep together. Everyone here works grimly with a definite purpose and faces the

realities confronting the cyclopean work of re-creating a Nation.

"The lack of social intercourse does not however detract from the interest of the place. The sight of the streets alone is most interesting and edifying. Everyone is so busy and there are so many people here that it is hardly possible to walk leisurely in the streets during the rush hours of the day. One is taken up and carried by the crowd. And the crowd is the most diversified and picturesque that one can see in any place, not even barring the proverbial bridge in Constantinople. You see, volunteers of all kinds have rushed here not only from Anatolia, but from every Turkish country, every Turkish village of the world and even from the most diversified Muslim countries of Asia and Africa. It is a real Babel, but of costumes not of languages: every one speaks Turkish. Turkish Anatolian peasants, with baggy trousers, wide blue belts and thin turbans over their fez, fraternize with Tartars and Kirghiz of Turkestan. Azerbeidjanian and Caucasian Turks, with tight-fitting black coats and enormous black astrakan kolpaks on their heads — runaways from Bolshevik Russia — are discussing the principles of real democracy as applied to Nationalist Turkey and comparing them with the so-called democracy of Soviet lands. Muslim Chinamen and Hindoos are talking over the future of Turkey and Islam. All the nations of Asia intermingle here and most

of them have official missions in Angora: Embassies from Afghanistan, Beluchistan, Bokhara, Khiva and from the different new Republics of Turkestan, duly accredited representatives from Persia and Azerbeidjan. The quota from Africa is also very large and while there are no diplomatic missions from African countries—for the simple reason that all African countries are colonies—many are the Fellahs from Egypt, the Algerians and Moroccans and even the Muslim negroes of North Africa who can be seen in the streets.

“And all this crowd is active and busy. Everybody talks and gesticulates and rushes through the streets to accomplish some purpose.

“The modern European touch is brought by the Turks from the big centers, Nationalist leaders who have come here from Constantinople and other large cities, clad in sack suits or in uniforms cut on western patterns, but all wearing the black fur kolpak which has replaced throughout the country the red felt fez as national head-gear.

“In the village proper there is not a house which does not shelter more people than it has rooms. So quite a few of the people who now live in Angora have been quartered in small farmhouses around the country and are obliged to commute every day to and from their business. There are of course no suburban trains or street cars and the “commuters” are obliged to use carriages as

all the automobiles—mostly Fords—are being used for military purposes or for transporting travellers and goods from villages to villages. The carriage is therefore the only means of conveyance in Angora. "Carriage" is, of course, a rather complimentary term: true that they have four wheels and are drawn by horses, but they generally have no springs, and two boards running parallel to each other and facing the horse are used as seats. From their wooden roofs hang coloured curtains and the occupants are vigourously shaken over the uneven pavement of the streets.

"There are only a very few shops, but no one has time or leisure to shop. The strict necessities of life can be obtained at the open counters of the bazaars or markets and if they are not to be found there one has either to do without or to import them from Constantinople or from some other city. Amusement places are absolutely non-existent: no theaters, not even movies. And of course no saloons or bars since Prohibition is vigourously enforced in Anatolia. There are one or two coffee-houses where a few old native peasants sit peacefully and, over a cup of coffee or a smoke of the 'narghilé,' talk of the good old days. The hostelry of the place has its lounge turned into a dormitory. Travellers are at times obliged to sleep even on the steps of the stairs, so no space can be allotted for recreation. Besides it would be useless; no one here has time for amuse-

ment or recreation and if you ask any one how he passes his time he will be able to answer you with a single word: 'Work.' Every one is at work to save the life of the country, every one is endeavouring to improve the community, every one is engaged in assisting in some way or other the Government and the nation.

"The offices of the Government are quartered in the largest buildings. An old barrack shelters most of them. Its enormous rooms have been partitioned into offices with a long corridor running between them. Every office has a door on this corridor. On some of these doors there are inscriptions indicating the names of the departments which abide therein. The Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Commerce, the Treasury Department, the Department of Agriculture and all other civilian departments are located in this building.

"Another enormous building, a former school, shelters all the departments pertaining to every activity necessary to the national defense. Its offices are arranged on the same style as those for civilian activities. Thus the Nationalist Government has, fittingly, differentiated its war activities from its administrative activities. The departments which are engaged in constructive work, whose activities will secure the nation's development and progress are completely separated from those whose duty is to secure the national defense.



"The two most active civilian departments, or rather the two departments to which the National Government attaches the greatest importance among those engaged in constructive work are the Department of Public Education and the Department of Hygiene. And if—as all of us here are absolutely convinced—the programs of these two departments are strictly adhered to, Anatolia will be in a very few years the best educated and the most hygienic country in the Old World.

"The Government conducts its business in the most democratic way possible. The different heads of departments are members of the National Assembly and are, therefore, all chosen directly by the people. They are delegated to manage the departments by the vote of all the members of the Assembly. Each head of department is individually responsible to the Assembly for the good conduct and administration of his department. He is removable by the vote of the Assembly which immediately elects his successor. The heads of the departments have their private offices whose doors are always open to all. As the Government is of the people and for the people any citizen who desires to see one of his deputies concerning a matter connected with his department has the right to come in and is received at once without any formalities. But he has to attend immediately to his business and then he has to leave. Efficiency is the slogan of the National Government

and for this purpose all red tape has been completely eliminated. No loitering, no 'manana' policy is indulged in. Things that have to be done, have got to be done immediately and no one has the right to interfere for the pleasure of following the dictates of a set routine. Truly this is the most efficient form of government that I have ever seen.

"The National Assembly is located in the only really attractive and modern building of Angora. It has been especially erected to house the Parliament and has a large meeting-room, a reading-room and private offices for the representatives of the people. While it is not luxurious, it is as comfortable and as serviceable as need be. It is situated on a large square not far from the station.

"And now that you have an accurate idea of the general aspect of the capital, now that you know that this is no place for amusements or social activities, you will want to know something more about the people, their ideals and their aims.

"I think that, for all these purposes, I might as well give you a description of the two principal figures who to-day stand out distinctly as the two leaders of the Turkish Nationalist Government; the two national heroes who personify better than any one else the spirit which animates so powerfully Anatolia and the whole Turkish race. One is a man and the other a woman. You surely

have already guessed: I am referring to Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the undisputed leader of Turkish manhood, and to Halidé Hanoum, the equally peerless leader of modern Turkish women.

"As you know, Mustapha Kemal Pasha is not only the promoter, but the soul and the brain of the new Turkey. That he represents exactly all Turkish aspirations and embodies the ideals of modern Turkey is best proved by the fact that upon his arrival in Anatolia he was elected by the wish of the people to the Presidency of the National Assembly, the highest executive function, and to the Field Marshalship of the National Army, the highest military function. And he has been ever since maintained in both these most responsible positions by the general consensus of the whole nation.

"And this has been done almost against the personal wishes of Mustapha Kemal Pasha. He is neither ambitious nor desirous of holding power. In fact he is what might be called a self-appointed 'power prohibitionist.' And if he remains in power it is exclusively because the people want him to and, being a convinced democrat, he bows his head to the wish of the people. Of course, at the beginning of the movement, when the national aspirations of the Turks sought some one to formulate them and to organize the country, Mustapha Kemal Pasha took the lead without shunning its responsibilities and without a second's hesitation

on account of the price that he personally would have to pay should he fail in his undertaking. He set to work with the indomitable patriotic courage which marks national heroes.

"His energy, his straightforwardness, his frankness and the rapidity with which he made decisions coupled to the firmness with which he saw that decisions, once made, were immediately executed became apparent even during the first weeks of his administration and gradually won him the full confidence and devotion of his people. This would have been his opportunity had he desired to establish a dictatorship, had he wanted to place his personal interests above the interests of his country, had his democratic utterances been of the lips and not of the heart. During the first months of the national movement Turkey was taking the chance of seeing its individual freedom trampled once more under the booted feet of an Abdul-Hamid or an Enver . . . if the leader who was offering himself had been any one else than Mustapha Kemal. But the Pasha had given a few years before the proof of his matchless patriotism and abnegation by stepping back into an inconspicuous command after having saved his country by a series of victories at the Dardanelles, and therefore the country felt pretty safe in confiding its destinies to the hands of Mustapha Kemal Pasha.

"The events have proved that this confidence

could not have been better placed. Under the very guns of Turkey's enemies he organized the national resistance and changed the prevailing state of nervousness and despondency into an intelligent state of national efficiency and enthusiasm. Starting with a handful of followers he opened new horizons to the Turkish people, discouraged and broken-hearted by their previous utter collapse. While the nation lay prostrated at the mercy of its enemies, he stepped forth and showed to the Turks the silver lining behind the threatening clouds and demonstrated once more to the world that a nation which is led properly and has a will to live is unconquerable.

"Mustapha Kemal Pasha had a double duty to perform. Turkey disarmed and bound hand and foot, her capital occupied by the enemy, her Government departments and administration completely disorganized, had to regain her independence and needed therefore not only a capable military chief but also a capable organizer and statesman. Mustapha Kemal Pasha rose to the occasion and while he was organizing on one hand the military resources of his country, while he was arming and training thousands of recruits and building up factories to furnish them with guns and ammunition and to clothe them as best he could, he was on the other hand helping the National Assembly to formulate a new constitution, to make a new form of government—a sort

of republic fitted to the peculiar requirements of Turkey—based on the broadest and most practical principles of democracy.

“And as soon as his military victories secured the existence of his country and permitted him to work on more permanent matters he turned completely to the National Assembly—resigning his commission as Commander-in-Chief—and devoted his attention to the consolidation of the new form of Government and to the perfection of its administration.

“But as the enemy, once more encouraged and equipped by powerful western powers, again took the offensive and advanced into Anatolia, burning villages, killing civilians and massacring old men, women and children, the National Assembly turned again to Mustapha Kemal Pasha and electing him once more Commander-in-Chief, asked him for new victories—and Turkey did not have to wait long to have her wishes satisfied by the military genius of the Pasha.

“Ever since the definite organization of the National Assembly, Mustapha Kemal Pasha has spent all his energies in investing it with the powers he held in his own hands. He has methodically and without faltering worked to transfer his own unlimited powers as Chief Executive and Commander to the duly elected representatives of the people. This process of self-restriction has gone so far that to-day the Turkish National Assembly

is endowed with far greater powers and prerogatives than any House of Representatives or Parliament of any country. It has all the sovereign prerogatives including those of declaring war and concluding peace. It elects its own members to the different administrative functions of the Cabinet and removes them whenever it sees fit. And all this thanks to the restriction of his own powers by Mustapha Kemal Pasha.

"In doing this the Turkish hero had a double purpose: he knows that the ideas and ideals he is fighting for are not personal to him but are shared by the whole nation and he wants to prove this to the world—on the other hand, a true democrat at heart, he wants the entire nation, through its duly elected representatives, to be enabled to handle its own destinies as it sees fit. Sure of final military success, he desired to increase within the nation the number of statesmen capable of perpetuating indefinitely the life of a rejuvenated Turkey. And through painstaking efforts, through sharing gradually his own responsibilities with members of the National Assembly he has created a nucleus of statesmen enjoying the national confidence and capable of commanding international esteem, who will be able to guide their country along the road of progress.

"All the actions of Mustapha Kemal Pasha have been dictated by his peerless patriotism, his

genuine spirit of abnegation and his absolute unselfishness.

"This modern Turkish Washington lives with his civilian and military household in a little house near the station and opposite the building of the National Assembly. This house, which is surrounded by a garden with big trees and flowers, was originally the house of the station master. It has eight or ten rooms, small and unpretentious, soberly furnished throughout. The only luxury in the house is a writing-desk almost as large as the room it occupies. At this table Mustapha Kemal Pasha spends all his time when he is not at the front or on military and administrative tours of inspection, or working at the National Assembly. It is in this den that the General works from early in the morning until late at night, without any distraction, continuously and painstakingly striving to bring about his dream—not a dream of personal ambition or of national conquests, but a dream of freedom and of independence for a people—his people—whose one aim is to remain master of its own home.

"The leader of Turkish women, Halidé Edib Hanoum, is in her own field as great a figure as Mustapha Kemal Pasha. Her talents are most diversified and she has, like Mustapha Kemal Pasha, a very strong will for putting through anything she undertakes. Although she is still young she has been for many years at the head



of the movement for the emancipation of Turkish women. You probably remember, as I do, that she first attracted public attention when her verses were published. It created quite a stir in Turkey as she was the first Turkish poetess, at least the first who came out under her own name and bowed to the public through her books. I still remember the first time I saw her, in the good old pre-war days in the summer of 1913. I had gone with some friends to the Sweet Waters of Asia on the Bosphorus which were at that time the fashionable 'rendezvous' on Friday afternoons. The little stream bordered with old trees and green meadows was crowded with rowboats and caïks leisurely gliding on its transparent waters. Suddenly among the boats I saw a slender skiff with two rowers wearing embroidered Oriental liveries. At the stern a young girl was sitting, her veil a little more transparent than it was usually worn at the time and her dark brown locks showing a little more than those of her sisters. She held a white embroidered parasol daintily in her hand to shelter her from the strong rays of the summer sun. Her pensive black eyes were beautiful. Her boat crossed ours and the vision had disappeared in a few seconds. I held my breath and asked my companions who she was, and when I heard that it was 'Halidé Hanoum, the poetess' I was more impressed than ever. Little did I guess that the next time I would see her it would be here in Angora.

"Of course you know her career during these pre-war days and possibly also during the war. She managed always to be a little ahead of her sisters, the other Turkish women who were clamouring for the emancipation of their sex. She was the first one who gradually and almost imperceptibly lifted the veil of her contemporaries, she was the first Turkish woman who engaged in newspaper polemics and addressed public meetings. Even in those days she was a leader but she had not yet come into her own. It took the national *épopée* of Anatolia to bring out in her all the mature attributes of a really great woman, a leader among leaders, a practical and rational woman of action even though extremely advanced.

"She was, I think, the first woman to come to Angora. Communication with Constantinople being then interrupted she had to cross in carriage, on foot or on horseback the mountains of Anatolia. The hardships she went through would make the subject of a long novel. During nearly four weeks—the time it took her to reach Angora—not once did she find a decent bed to rest in, and even her husband, Adnan Bey, was exhausted when they arrived here. But it did not take her long to recover and within a short time she was engaged body and soul in organizing educational campaigns throughout Anatolia and in teaching the peasant women all the different ways in which they could be useful to their country.

"At the first vacancy in the National Assembly she became a candidate and went personally before her constituency. She was, of course, elected by an overwhelming majority and of course she distinguished herself in her parliamentary work. In fact she criticised so well the educational system then in vogue and offered such excellent constructive suggestions that her colleagues of the National Assembly elected her Secretary of Public Education in the Cabinet.

"She was successfully holding this position when the enemy started his spring drive and the Commander-in-Chief issued a proclamation calling under the colours all persons who could hold a gun. She immediately took advantage of this to establish once more the equal rights of women: on the plea that, being a huntress she not only could hold a gun but also knew how to use it, she enrolled in the army and won the grade of non-commissioned officer for bravery on the field, at the battle of Sakaria. After the successful repulse of the enemy and when the armies were disbanded for the winter she returned to Angora where she is now completing and perfecting the organization of Turkish women for educational, racial and hygienic betterment.

"Halidé Edib Hanoum lives in a little cottage, a farm, situated at about one hour's ride from the village and which is reached through a long, dusty road. Nestled within a bouquet of trees and at a

short distance from a clear little stream which sings its way through rocks and flowers, stands the rustic cottage of Halidé Hanoum. It has a nice little orchard and, further back behind the trees is a pasture where she keeps a few cows. It is an ideal place for this loving and beloved woman leader, for here she can withdraw—when she finds time from her various occupations—and ride or hunt or else write, according to her whim of the moment.

“The house is furnished scrupulously in Turkish style—the Turkish style of villages: no rich embroideries and beautiful hangings, but simple divans lined up against the whitewashed walls, one or two carpets, and a copper ‘brazero’ in the living-room. And of course books, a large collection of books in every language—English, French and German which she speaks remarkably well—and a few hunting guns.

“The last time I saw her she was returning from a ride on horseback as I entered the gate. And I cannot say which of the two pictures is most striking: that of a young girl in a rowboat on the Sweet Waters of Asia, or that of a woman, slim and athletic, gracefully riding astride a beautiful horse, her uncovered face proudly erect and her features, now more mature, proclaiming the mind and the will of a leader!

“She asked me to tea, and in her simple little drawing-room we sat with her husband and lis-

tened. She talked to us of her aspirations and hopes—not social aspirations, to which all young and attractive women are entitled, but the aspirations and hopes of seeing one day soon the Turkish women, her sisters, recognised as the most progressive and advanced women of the world and pointed out, even in foreign countries, as the models of true womanhood.”

Little can be added to this picture given by Djemil Haidar Bey on the life in the Nationalist capital and the organization of New Turkey. Since his letter was written events have proved that he had in no way exaggerated the efficient work and the patriotism of the Turks in Anatolia. They have succeeded in accomplishing the impossible. Their countrymen all over the Old Ottoman Empire as well as in the confines of Asia share fully their joy as they had shared their sorrows and pains. We are all proud of the unequalled accomplishments of our people and we firmly believe, no matter what the immediate future has in store for us of further struggles and further sufferings—no matter how vicious a propaganda our enemies may have recourse to so as to minimize the effect and results of our victories—that New Turkey, a rejuvenated nation which has given such patent proofs of its unconquerable spirit of self-sacrifice and indomitable will to live, a people which, despite the most insurmountable obstacles thrown in its way by unfair enemies, has

succeeded in emancipating itself from all political, economic, religious and personal prejudices—will shatter completely its material and moral chains and continue its advance—free and independent—on the road to culture, progress and civilization.









